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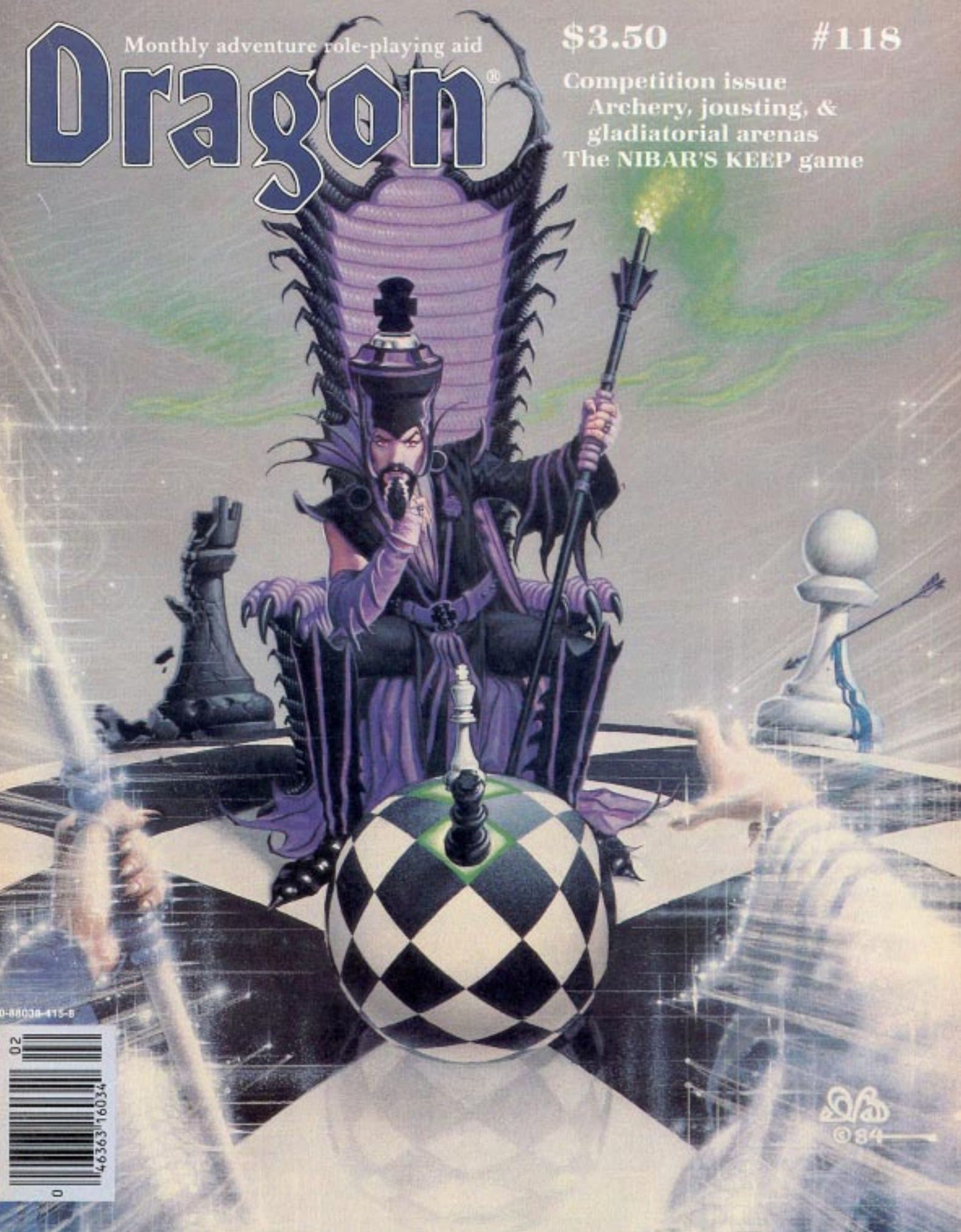
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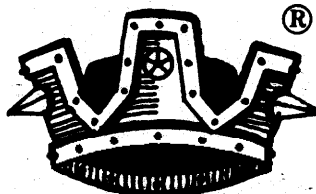
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Magazine

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COVER

The final piece in a series of fantastic chess paintings makes its appearance on the cover of this issue. Denis Beauvais's *The Draw* is actually a self-portrait; Denis is wearing one of his (quite real) fantasy costumes in the role of the Black King. The intense rivalry that one feels between the Black King and the onrushing viewer perfectly symbolize the theme of this issue: the competition within games themselves.

LETTERS

3-D thinking

Dear Dragon:

Recently (in issue #116), I read an article on Chaosium's ELFQUEST® game. Are there more Chaosium game articles in the works? I would really enjoy a couple of CALL OF CTHULHU® game articles now and then.

I especially enjoyed your castle kit which appeared a while back (issue #86). I hope to see more of this type of feature in the future. Maybe a special "game crafts" section could be integrated into DRAGON® Magazine's current monthly features. Patterns for castles, carts, ships, siege machines, etc., could be printed, along with construction ideas using household items (such as washers for portholes or modified spoons for catapult arms). I understand the heavy cardboard in the center of the magazine probably costs a lot more to produce, so maybe this could be reserved for precolored patterns, while most features could be traced from standard paper patterns to balsa wood or similar material.

Chris Ewich
Tacoma, WA

At the moment, we don't have any CALL OF CTHULHU game articles — but we wouldn't mind seeing a few from our readers, hint hint. I like the game, myself

You were correct in saying that we wouldn't be able to run special cut-out-and-fold-up sections very often because of cost, but we are interested in suggestions from readers on the kinds of cut-out sections that would be the most useful in gaming. We also have a few of these planned out ourselves. — RM

Out of control

Dear Dragon:

I have a friend who is, to say the least, not a very good DM. He was okay once, but now he is getting out of hand. For example, a friend of mine has a character in this person's campaign; in about a month (and he only plays him a few times a week), he has become a deity. He got this by the use of a *wish*. He also got his strength raised from a 16 to the equivalent of Thor's strength, and along with it he got Thor's hammer (also with a *wish*). This DM has a few other people in his campaign, and we would like to get him back to being a partially good DM, but we haven't the slightest idea how. I decided to write you to find out if there is any way we can get him to be a more reasonable DM.

(Name and address withheld by editor)

The thing that might help the most right now would be to have someone else be the Dungeon Master for a while — someone who can start a new campaign land (even a small one) and set things off on a better foot. Talk the current DM into being a player again for a change — he

might welcome it, and he might (given a few months) alter his old campaign to come back into line with what the players want. I had the same problem that your DM has, and getting a berserk campaign back into control is hard to do — but it can be done. — RM

Some suggestions

Dear Dragon:

I just received issue #116 of DRAGON Magazine, and it was refreshing to see articles on other role-playing games instead of just TSR products. I hope that you will keep this up, and maybe I'll even get to see an article or two on the RUNEQUEST® game. It would be nice. Maybe there even might be room in DUNGEON™ Adventures one day to include modules from other role-playing games.

I also hope that you will be bringing back some of the miniature reviews to the pages of your magazine. I think that is what I miss most from the older DRAGON Magazines (a cross between a miniatures magazine and the publication it is today). Though you are a more professional magazine, I do miss that miniatures-magazine charm of the old wargame magazines (like the *Armchair General* and *Wargamer's Newsletter*) that gave you a kind of intimacy that I can't quite describe.

Until this issue, your publication really didn't cater to my interests or really seem to care. Not one of many letters that I had written has ever been answered, and I really don't expect this one to be answered, either. However, I do hope that you will be covering more aspects of the hobby than TSR publications and material, such as the articles on other role-playing games, reviews of miniatures, and reviews of other products that come out.

Herman Liebson
Valois, NY

We've pointed this out before, but we do not receive a great deal of material on role-playing games other than those produced by TSR, Inc. This isn't our prejudice; please note that the ARES™ Section covered an enormous variety of science-fiction games (many of them NOT produced by TSR, Inc.). We run the best of what we get — but non-TSR games are in the minority. This particular issue reflects this problem.

DUNGEON Adventures will remain strictly for the D&D and AD&D games for the time being. You might find some interesting modules that could be adapted to almost any other fantasy role-playing game in DUNGEON Adventures, however.

We aren't considering miniatures reviews at the moment (though that's still a possibility). However, we are considering articles on the painting and use of miniature figures in gaming. You may find some of these articles to be of particular use — and perhaps you might consider sending an article or two of your own on the topics you'd most like to see. — RM

Editorial psychosis

Let's see. In the first week that I came back from Christmas vacation, the computer broke down twice, the film processor jammed, the H&J-print machine burned out, and I accidentally blew a fuse when I turned on the photocopier. Then Carolyn Vanderbilt (one of our beloved typesetters) regretfully said that she would be leaving us, and shortly after that, I received a ransom note for \$1,000,000 from two of my co-workers, "or you'll never see your Mr. Potato Head again!" Attached to the note was one of my Mr. Potato Head's little plastic ears.

Now I hear that MTV isn't renewing Martha Quinn's contract. Oh, cruel fate! How can an editor function in such chaos?

The only wonderful thing that happened in the whole week was that we hired Barbara Young as our newest editorial staff member. Barbara is now the assistant editor for DUNGEON™ Adventures, just as Robin Jenkins is the assistant editor for DRAGON® Magazine. Barbara spends most of her free time renovating her hovel, as she calls it, and offering me advice ("Don't deal with terrorists; make them bring Mr. Potato Head back in one piece.")

Lest anyone fear that we finished making our changes in DRAGON® Magazine with the return of Sage Advice, the Bazaar, the Bestiary, and fantasy fiction, be warned that this was only the start. Other new offerings are in the works, though we want to keep our doings secret for the moment.

On a different topic, this issue is on competition in gaming — but not the sort of competition in which players themselves are rated. I confess that I've never tried to be rated as a gamer or a game referee; that sort of thing seems to defeat the purpose of gaming (which, to my mind, is socializing and relaxing). Worse yet, I suspect that I am not always a very good gamer, and I'd rather not advertise that!

No, the competition in this issue is between characters — and no one really minds if their characters go toe-to-toe in the arena or on the jousting field. The tension of the die roll is magnified to Olympic proportions when your elven fighter (19 dexterity) is trying to outshoot Jeff's

(continued on page 77)

The World Gamers Guide

If you live outside the continental United States and Canada, you can be included in the World Gamers Guide by sending your name and full address, plus your gaming preferences, to World Gamers Guide, DRAGON® Magazine, P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva WI 53147.

Abbreviations in parentheses after a name indicate games in which that person is especially interested: AD = AD&D® game; DD = D&D® game; CC = CALL OF CTHULHU® game; GW = GAMMA WORLD® game;

SF = STAR FRONTIERS® game; ST = STAR TREK®: The Role-Playing Game; MSH = MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game; TS = TOP SECRET® game; T = TRAVELLER® game; RQ = RUNE-QUEST® game; VV = VILLAINS & VIGILANTES™.

The World Gamers Guide is intended for the benefit of gamers who live outside the continental United States and Canada, in areas where nearby gamers are small in number or nonexistent, as a way for them to contact

other game-players who would be interested in corresponding about the activities that they enjoy. Unfortunately, we cannot extend this service to persons who live in remote areas of the U.S. or Canada, or to U.S. military personnel with APO or FPO addresses. Each eligible name and address that we receive will be published in three consecutive issues of DRAGON® Magazine; to be listed for more than three issues, you must send in another postcard or letter.

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Science & Sorcery in Earth's Far Future

FORUM

Looking over the current AD&D® rules, I note a problem: The knight in shining armor astride his heavy warhorse can't move.

A heavy warhorse can carry a maximum of 7,500 gp weight. Plate barding weighs 5,000 gp. The knight weighs an average of 1,750. The plate mail he wears weighs 450 (or 650 if he is in full plate). His large shield weighs 100. For weapons, he has a heavy lance, 150; long sword, 60, and a dagger, 10.

Thus, we have a total of 7,520 gp weight and we have yet to add any supplies, a missile weapon, or any of the dozens of other things a prepared adventurer will want. Just this alone already exceeds the maximum encumbrance the warhorse can carry.

We can lighten the load on the poor horse, but this should not be necessary. The knight on his heavy warhorse is supposed to be the equivalent of a tank, able to carry a massive load far beyond this minimum level. The heavy warhorse should not be in danger of collapsing if its rider has a heavy lunch. Some of the rules must be altered.

My own suggestion would be that the weight of barding be counted as about 40% for encumbrance purposes — this due to being spread evenly over the horse and thus, not being as great a burden. However, the basic point is that the current rules are completely contrary to both reality and to fantasy as we prefer it. Some changes are needed.

David Carl Argall
La Puente, CA

DRAGON® Magazine seems to be constantly reexamining itself. As customer, I would rather change TSR's publishing division rather than the magazine. Kim Mohan told us in issue #110 that changes were needed because DRAGON Magazine had stopped growing. I doubt that alterations in the magazine can reverse that. Most role-playing gamers read and enjoy — DRAGON Magazine. But nonplayers do not know that it exists. What the magazine needs is for TSR, Inc. to find new markets.

Role-playing should be as popular as SCRABBLE or MONOPOLY games. But most people think it is incomprehensible or that it is a form of teenage rebellion. Maybe advertising can dispel this impression. The AD&D game revision also might help. All beginners would appreciate one set containing everything a player or DM needs. The set must be cheap, however, or else it will scare people away. I think this is possible. The rulebook could have a few pages describing role-playing, a chapter on the most popular spells, classes, races, weapons, monsters, mythos and magical items, and maybe 50 pages of data, like a big DM's screen or the monster listing in the DMG.

The revisions themselves create a problem. It is disheartening to think that the game you are playing is about to become obsolete. I do not want to abandon my campaign. Please make the AD&D game rewrite compatible with the current books. I cannot explain the difference between the D&D and the AD&D games to

beginners; two AD&D games would be worse. Generating new role players may be difficult, but DRAGON Magazine cannot gain readers without new gamers.

Thomas Kane
Farmington, ME

In the *Dungeon Masters Guide* and in the *Players Handbook*, all alignments are very restrictive. All are very narrow views of the world. I think that there should be an alignment that gives the characters some flexibility. A player should be able to do good deeds when he wants to and sometimes do bad deeds in order to survive. None of the alignments given allow you to do this. The closest is probably chaotic evil, but even this alignment indicates that you should only look out for yourself. I think there should be some solution, but what?

Paul Griffin
Brooklyn, NY

I have just completed reading DRAGON Magazine issue #115, the November 1986 issue. My favorite (and most common) character is the thief, I have found these articles very helpful. I may now plan a thieves' guild (though in the four years I've played the AD&D game, I haven't had a thief survive long enough to become a guildmaster). The article on climbing walls helped me too. In addition, previous articles on poison and articles in the Best of Dragon, Volume III, have given me other insights on thieves. More recently, *Lankhmar* has come out. However, I have not found a sufficient way to give experience points to thieves for thieving! In the DMG it says very little about rating experience points for coinage, and when I tried to use this information, the characters either gained too little experience (killing a tribe of goblins) or gained an unruly amount of levels (destroying a dragon)! If you could make a new system for thieving or treasure, I would be pleased. If the information I seek has been previously published, please tell me which issue of DRAGON Magazine provided this information. Thank you.

Greg Surbeck
Ellicott City, MD

Over the course of the past two or three years I have seen many Forum letters discussing the official AD&D game rules. I have problems with those people who stick to only "official" rules for the game. In my campaign, the only elves are the faerie, based on old European folklore (a good example of these elves would be the faerie folk from Marion Zimmer Bradley's *The Mists of Avalon*). I also use very little magic, allow shape-changing humans as PCs, use a completely different bard class of my own design, and have a different hit-point system modified to accurately reflect damage from attacks.

I am sure many players out there will argue that I am no longer playing the AD&D game. I still, however, use the standard rules and only change them to make the game more fun, or to keep my campaign's individual flavor.

This flexibility is one of the reasons I play the

AD&D game instead of, for example, the RUNE-QUEST® game, which generally has more consistent rules and internal logic. The AD&D game's main strong point is that, although set in a basically European background, it can be modified for play in other settings, as illustrated by the *Oriental Adventures* game book.

My advice to all DMs who are hung up on the "official rules" is to loosen up a bit and try customizing your campaign.

Ethan Sicotte
West Dummerston, VT

To save John Goldie and other gamers baffled by illusions some piece of mind, I've decided to write to the Forum column. Many a time I've had a dispute about illusions, invisibility, and the *phantasmal force* spell. I have had to totally rerun encounters — changing monsters, traps, and attack forms. I understand how you feel.

Creatures with low or animal (and, in some cases, sub-animal) intelligence are most definitely affected by illusions. If you've seen a scared animal, you should know what I mean. The spell-caster doesn't have to create a creature with an illusion, and in this case he could use fire. Most any creature with a lower intelligence is absolutely terrified by fire, but fire is not the only thing one can use against these creatures. Just fight their natural instincts by creating a natural disaster, such as a landslide, or by creating a mockery of another spell's effects.

When the *Player's Handbook* states that an illusion lasts until struck by an opponent, it means that the illusion has no effect on an opponent that strikes in disbelief. So when Clyde the Ranger notices something a little peculiar about his foe, he swings at it (making a "to hit" roll) to see if it is real or not. If it is not real, his sword passes right through it, but others, thinking that their foe is real, think that it has been cut by Clyde. Clyde may tell them that it's not real and prove it to them, however.

With the *phantasmal force* spell, "something peculiar" about the illusion created may be the fact that "audial illusion is not a component of the spell" (*Players Handbook*, page 75). So when Deekus the Illusionist tries to create a groaning spirit with the spell, he finds that it does no good because his opponent sees, but doesn't hear the banshee wail, causing immediate disbelief to those learned of the spirit and those belonging to the Verbobonc Banshee Hunter's Club. If any illusion touches a foe, it makes him think he has been hit by the illusion, and imaginary damage is taken. It does nothing to affect the potency of the spell. If a person is "killed" by an illusion, he merely passes out. By the way, a "to hit" roll must be made to escape the effects of an illusion.

A saving throw is given to those who find something peculiar about their illusory foe, but it is not needed for dead giveaways, such as the illusory banshee listed above. The saving throw is also given to those told of the illusion's falsity (like Clyde's buddies) who choose not to strike that round.

I agree with Mr. Goldie that an article on illusions (not just invisibility) would be a great idea, and I wish that I could do it. There are many others out there who would handle it better than I would though.

Chris Lincoln
Portland, OR

John Goldie's letter concerning *phantasmal force* and related magics in the Forum (issue #116) reminded me of how my players and I have handled illusions during the six years I
(continued on page 77)

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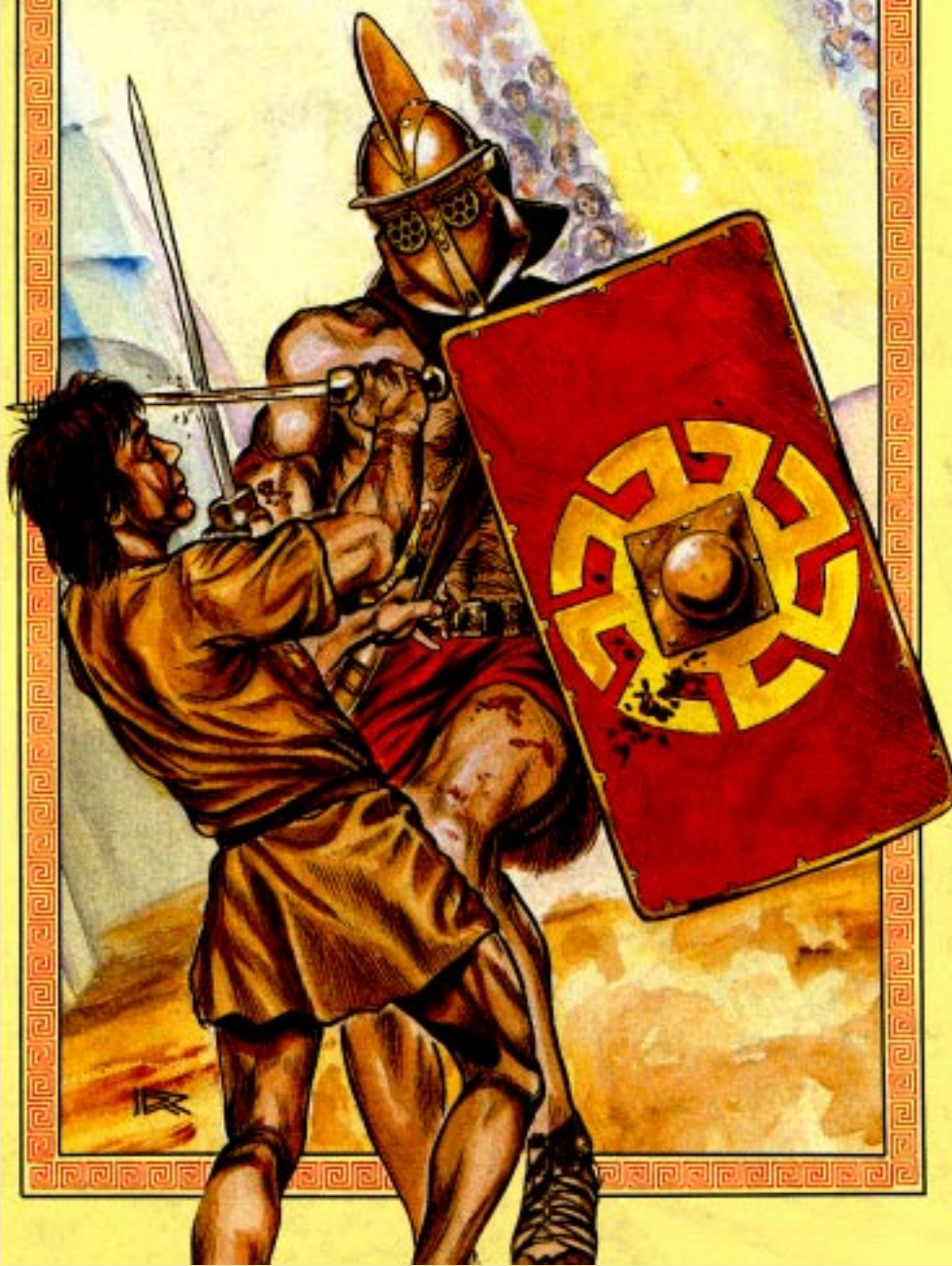
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THE FIGHTING CIRCLE



Gladiatorial combat in the AD&D® game

by Dan Salas

The battlefield's hot sands were stained red under the afternoon sun. Ignoring the heat, Arius Caldia fought to keep his vision clear and his legs steady. He was at the limit of his strength. His head swirled with dizziness, and his chest was soaked with blood and throbbing with pain. Despite his agony, Arius somehow managed to stay on his feet.

The roar of 30,000 people rang in his ears. Half-blindly, he scanned the rows of shouting, cheering spectators that encircled the small battlefield. Arius felt disgust and hatred for them. He knew that they would probably not be satisfied until he joined the two warriors whom he had just fought. Both men now lay dead on different sides of the arena, victims of the audience's cruelty and of Arius' bloodstained short sword.

Just as he was beginning to hope that the duels were finished, an iron door slid open at the far end of the circular pit. A huge fighter stepped into the sunlight. The audience howled with renewed excitement. Arius looked with despair at his new enemy — tall and bearlike, head and face hidden in a thick metal helmet, left side covered by a large rectangular shield, and a short sword gleaming in his right hand.

Arius' heart was almost as heavy as his exhausted arms. He knew that he could not win another duel, especially against such a formidable opponent. All he wanted was to die quickly and painlessly, and to be remembered as a courageous warrior. His vision blurred and he patiently waited for death.

Suddenly he heard a tigerish snarl. He opened his eyes to see the other warrior charge like a battering ram, sword raised high. The weapon lunged toward Arius' throat, but the smaller man instinctively knocked it aside with his own blade. His mind sharpened, his body tensed, and he returned a vicious cut that sent his opponent staggering back in surprise and fear. Swords clashed again and again in the arena, and the crowd cheered on. . . .

Gladiatorial combat can fit easily into any fantasy game world. Though this article is designed for use in the AD&D® game, its rules are adaptable to most role-playing game systems. Any character can stage armed combat in a village or castle, but these rules were created on a scale equal to the glorious games of ancient Rome.

Historical gladiatorial contests first began with the Etruscan custom of forcing slaves to fight to the death in funeral ceremonies. This insured companions for an important person in the afterlife. The Romans adopted this practice in 264 B.C., when three pairs of slaves battled at the funeral of Brutus Pera. From these grim beginnings, the combats became a spectator sport in arenas all over the Roman Empire. The earliest "games" were often slaughters rather than actual fights, in which victims were tied helplessly to posts and devoured by leopards. But the main attraction became armed combat between two fighters. Several attempts were made to suppress the bloody spectacle of the arena, though none succeeded until A.D. 500.

The alignment and social attitudes of a society must determine whether or not that society condones gladiatorial sports. Naturally, no good-aligned people enjoy watching fights to the death, as only a warlike race admires fighting skills. The Romans fit well into these restrictions. Their preference bordered on sadism, especially when helpless victims were fed to starving animals or when animals were slaughtered in combat with specially trained fighters. This article avoids discussing the murderous aspects of the arena and concentrates on the person-to-person fighting that was involved.

Gladiatorial fighting is a male-dominated sport. For simplicity, this article uses words such as "he" and "him" instead of "he/she" and "him/her." However, female players need not take offense. Women gladiators were a rare but popular addition to the games of ancient Rome, and female PCs are as welcome in the arena as their male comrades.

Before holding any games, it is necessary for the DM to choose between one of these campaign settings:

1. *Classical Roman.* This is the setting upon which most of the article is based, since ancient Rome was the only civilization which fully developed gladiatorial combat.
 2. *Medieval.* This setting is more like a typical AD&D game setting than the classical campaign, since the AD&D game is based on medieval European history. Medieval games will be dealt with in detail later.
 3. *Oriental.* This setting is designed for use with *Oriental Adventures*. Oriental games are dealt with in detail later.
- It would be unwise for a DM to mix these settings because of the differences between them. For example, classical gladiators are at a disadvantage because of their less damaging weapons, and Oriental gladiators are at an advantage because of the use of their ki power. There are already enough variations within each setting to keep players occupied without the necessity to mix campaign settings.
- It is interesting to note that the bloodshed and carnage of the classical Roman gladiatorial competitions were eventually replaced in the Middle Ages by the equally combative, though less lethal, tournament competitions. In turn, this competition has nearly disappeared from modern society (except in the form of fencing, wrestling, football, boxing, auto racing, and other sports of relative tame comparison). In the Far East, gladiatorial competition never made an appearance; the forms closest to gladiatorial competition in which these cultures indulged in were public matches held between rival martial arts schools. These competitions rarely resulted in lethal combat; the matches were performed more for display and for education than for commercial entertainment. In present Oriental societies, tame examples of these competitions exist in the form of martial-arts tournaments, sumo wrestling matches, and kendo competitions. Of course, the ultimate decision as to whether or not a campaign culture entertains itself with gladiatorial competitions is up to the DM.
- ### The fighters
- Most gladiators (in a fantasy campaign that parallels the classical Roman setting) are slaves, criminals, and prisoners of war. Instead of labor slavery, imprisonment, or execution, they are enrolled in gladiatorial schools for lengthy training, after which they are sent into the arena. The fame and fortune offered by the games even attracts free characters into the duels.
- Only combative classes are suitable for the arena. These include cavaliers, fighters, thieves, monks, and their sub-classes. Merciful DMs use noncombative-class captives for other purposes, since any

class not mentioned above has little chance of survival in the pit.

Also, the alignment of a PC or NPC should be considered before any fighting starts. Lawful-good characters refuse to fight for the enjoyment of a sadistic audience, and such characters are more likely to attempt an escape or die before abandoning their beliefs. Other good alignments allow gladiatorial duels only when there is no other choice. All non-good characters are free of these restrictions.

It is the goal of every enslaved gladiator to fight his way to liberty. After three years of arena experience, a gladiator receives a ceremonial wooden sword in his last forced game. This sword is given by the game's official in front of the cheering audience; it signifies the warrior's discharge from gladiatorial service. Some of these characters become trainers, while others are put into jobs such as laboring, serving, guarding, and soldiering.

Once per year after two more years, each gladiator rolls a 1d20 Charisma Check to attempt to be freed by his owner. Those who fail the check must remain in slavery for another year. Though not considered citizens, freed men are of the lower-lower social classes.

Freed gladiators are sometimes offered 1,000 gp by a game's official, with the obligation to enter the next event as a champion. Whether the fighting consists of duels or massed battles, it is the gladiator's choice to join or refuse.

Famous gladiators receive the favor of the people. They are treated as aristocrats in some cases, drawing the respect of the soldiers and, for men with decent charisma and comeliness scores, the love of young women. Some ex-gladiators become honored officers in the military or expensive bodyguards for top politicians.

Training schools

Since most gladiators are criminals and war prisoners, training schools resemble detention camps, complete with plenty of shackles, armed guards, and high, barricaded walls. Here, the prisoner-gladiators live, eat, sleep, and practice. Discipline is strict, and punishments are severe. When not in use, all weapons and armor are locked in an armory and carefully guarded.

Schools are owned either by the government or by private individuals. The chief manager is called a *lanista*. He oversees the work of the school's employees, administers its business, and he occasionally (20% chance) owns it himself. There is a 30% chance that he is an experienced gladiator (8th- to 11th-level fighter).

A player character can open a training school for profit. First a school must be bought or built. This costs 100 gp per

gladiator to be housed and trained. Next, equipment must be gathered. The total cost of equipping a school with weapons, armor, kitchen utensils, furniture, etc., is 50 gp per gladiator to be housed. If an equipped school is bought, add both of these fees together for the final price.

The school can now be opened. Criminals must be bought from the prisons and given instruction in the fighting arts. In a good-sized fantasy city, about 3-18 suitable men are available for sale per month, costing $d20 + 20$ gp each.

Running a school costs the owner 20 gp per untrained gladiator per month. A trained gladiator costs 15 gp per month. These expenses cover the hiring of trainers (5th-8th level fighters), guards (1st- and 2nd-level fighters), doctors, accountants, servants, and cooks, and also covers the buying of food and equipment.

After training is complete, the school can sell the unfree warriors for 300 gp per level or rent them for 20 gp per level, per duel. Rented gladiators who die cost the renter 300 gp per level; this is the total price and is not added to the rent fee. Free characters pay 300 gp for training, must remain on the grounds only during training hours, and are not subjected to the harsher aspects of the school.

To receive monthly income, follow these three steps:

1. There is a 5% chance for every 10 gladiators that the school trains that a free character enrolls in the school. This brings an income of 300 gp.

2. Each month, 50% of the school's trained gladiators are rented out and brought back alive. This brings an income of 20 gp per level of each character.

3. Each month, 40% of the school's trained gladiators are sold, either living or as rented fighters who died in the arena. For schools that are renting only, 30% of its gladiators are killed while rented. This brings an income of 300 gp per level of each gladiator.

As with modern businesses, it takes a lot of money to start a school. Characters will not see the profits until after a few months, but when the initial payments are passed, the income grows quickly. School owners are advised to buy untrained criminals whenever possible and to buy trained gladiators only when necessary. Counting only monthly upkeep costs, 240 gp are spent in putting a zero-level prisoner through training, while it costs 300 gp to buy a 1st-level gladiator. The 60 gp difference is quite large when multiplied by the number of gladiators that can be involved in a school.

DMs need to record the level of each gladiator, especially when characters buy trained prisoner-gladiators in order to rent them to other characters. All untrained

NPCs are zero-level fighters, and all recently-trained gladiators are 1st-level fighters. For level advancement, award each NPC gladiator 25 experience points per month.

Classical styles

Classical gladiators are divided into several different fighting styles (not classes). Each style has its own equipment as described below. Armor is barely used because the gladiators are expected to be schooled in defensive techniques which would alleviate the need for heavy protection. In addition to the equipment listed, many of the gladiators wear leather armor on the right arm from shoulder to wrist.

In each duel, a gladiator has a 20% chance of receiving this extra armor. [A *partial-armor combat system useful for this situation appeared in DRAGON® issue #112:*

"Armor piece by piece," by Matt Bandy – RM]

A *retiarius* is a warrior who wears only a short tunic. He uses a net and trident in combat.

A *thrax* wears a greave (a metal shin guard) on the left leg (armor class 4 for lower leg only), and carries a buckler shield. In one hand, he wields a dagger.

A *dimachare* wears one greave and carries a short sword in each hand. For this warrior, use the rules for fighting with a secondary weapon described in the *Dungeon Masters Guide*.

A *secutor* carries a large shield and wears a large helmet with visor. He uses the best weapon of the Roman arena: the *gladius*, or short sword. This was also the favorite weapon of the Roman army.

A *mirmillo* is equipped similarly to a *secutor*, except that *mirmillones* have a metal fish on the crests of their helmets.

A *sammite* is equal to a heavy infantry man. He wears a large helmet with visor and one greave. He carries a large shield and a short sword, and he has a 30% chance per duel of being allowed to wear banded mail armor.

A *hoplomache* is a *sammite* who has reached 5th level. Both are equipped similarly, except that a *hoplomache* has a 60% chance per duel of wearing bronze plate mail. The change of armor is a symbol of status.

Training procedure

In the schools, gladiators train for one full year before entering the games. This insures a good knowledge of weapon skills and a willingness to give a good fight. All students must practice for seven hours a day, six days a week. Any time missed must be made up before training is complete.

The first stage of training consists of exercises using wooden weapons against

wooden posts. At this time, gladiators are watched closely by the trainers, who then select the style that best suits each trainee. Roll 1d20 on Table 1 for each PC and NPC, as necessary. Since the trainers are experts in arena combat, they do not accept changes in these decisions. Displeased freemen can leave if they want, but their payment will not be refunded.

From this point, the trainees practice sparring with wooden weapons and, eventually, with real weapons. They learn how and where to strike, how to put on a good show, how to call for mercy from the audience, how to die honorably, and other important matters.

Students become proficient with the short sword and dagger, or the net and trident. If no proficiency slots are open, use slots that have not yet been gained by level advancement. Thus, either one or two of the upcoming slots will already be filled when the character reaches the next level.

At the end of the year, zero-level gladiators become 1st level, and all others receive 1,000 experience points per level at the start of training. Every graduate receives a scroll stating the gladiator's name, the name of the school, and the date of issue. Free characters can then pursue their careers at will, while other characters are rented out by the school or sold to the state or private businessmen.

The arena

Many days before the games, posters are set up everywhere to announce the time and place of the event, the official sponsor, the number of gladiators participating, and the types of combat to be seen.

The games are usually held in a circular building called an amphitheater. This huge structure is set up in a city or large town where there are enough spectators to support the event. The center of the building is the arena; its floor is covered with sand to absorb blood. This area is often 150-200' in diameter. Around the pit, the stands rise in progressively higher rings of seats. The official's platform overlooks the entire seating area as well as the arena. Under the stands are corridors and stairways for the spectators, a locked and guarded armory, business offices, guard rooms, stables, chambers for the gladiators, and animal cages with gates that open into the arena.

The largest amphitheaters can hold 50,000 people. The safest ones are built of stone, since wooden structures occasionally collapse under the weight of the crowd and kill most of the people inside (as actually happened in Roman times).

The cost of admission ranges from 1 gp for upper-level seats to 20 gp for seats

closest to the arena. State officials and important nobles always hold the best seats. Above them sit the wealthy aristocrats, and higher up sit the common people. Armed soldiers keep an eye on everything; rowdy or arrogant spectators risk being thrown into the pit to face wild dogs and lions. Roman-style soldiers have bronze plate mail, large shields, spears, and short swords.

The games begin with a blare of trumpets and a parade of the gladiators, who dress in colorful cloaks and ceremonial armor of gold and silver. They pause before the sponsor, raise their right hands in salute, and shout, "Hail from men about to die!" Soon, nonlethal duels with wooden weapons get things rolling. At a signal from the trumpets, warriors are called up from the waiting cells for deadly combat. Cowards are "inspired" by whips and hot irons. Solitary duels dominate most of the event.

In a Roman variation, the morning is spent in wild-beast fights, which include human victims and human opponents. At noon, there is an intermission. Spectators leave for lunch or stay to watch the gruesome executions of prisoners not suitable for gladiatorial status. In the afternoon comes the parade of gladiators, and the real games begin.

The DM must randomly choose the number of participants in this game. This decision should be influenced by the popularity of the games, the population of the area or city, the size of the amphitheater, and the wealth of the sponsor. One hundred duels are common, while Roman Imperial game contained 5,000 and even 10,000 duels.

Around 20 duels can be staged in one day. This limit gives an average time length of 10 rounds per duel, with five rounds between fights for collection of bodies and the preparation of the next gladiators.

Wealthy PCs can sponsor their own events to gain popularity and gold pieces. DMs need to decide the cost of renting (or building) an amphitheater, the price of announcing each event, and the cost of hiring guards and servants. Other figures include the number of gladiators who participate and the number of spectators who watch. Income is gathered in the form of admission prices, and gold must be given to the winners and owners of winners of the duels.

Victorious army commanders occasionally have plenty of war prisoners to fight in the gladiatorial games — these prisoners can be bought from an NPC commander or used directly by a PC commander. In either case, the gladiators receive no payment for their successes and therefore are a good investment.

Combat

Gladiators are chosen by lots in front of the crowd and called out one by one into the pit. Free gladiators can enter as many duels as they want. Prisoners are usually forced to fight only once during an event. Sometimes a hated criminal is condemned to fight two or three consecutive duels (this is considered an execution rather than fair fighting).

A *retiarius*, *thrax*, or *dimachare* who fights in a style in which he has not been properly trained suffers a penalty of -2 to hit. The other styles can be interchanged freely, unless they fight in one of the three styles mentioned above, in which case the penalty is used. Gladiators are proud of their own styles and do not like to stray from these fighting techniques.

There is only one way to win a duel: battle the enemy until he surrenders or dies. Normal melee combat rules are recommended for PCs, but if the DM wishes to resolve the duel more quickly (especially when matching two NPCs against each other), the combat resolution system detailed later should be used.

Knowledgeable fighters use every tactic available to them in a duel. This helps to avoid a typical hack-and-slash game. Lower-level gladiators especially should avoid this type of attritional combat.

A warrior with an entangling weapon can attempt to wrap it around his opponent's weapon arm (and the opponent then attacks at -4 to hit) or to grasp the man's leg and unbalance him (the entangler attacks at +2 to hit and the held opponent attacks at -2 to hit). If the entangler tugs on the weapon for an attack, his opponent must pass a 1d20 Dexterity Check (rolling his dexterity or less on 1d20) or fall to the ground). A successful hit is necessary in either case. Anyone entangled by a net, whip, or chain must pass a 1d20 Dexterity Check to pull himself free. A character entangled by a lasso must pass a 4d6 Dexterity Check to pull himself free. An entangled character can cut a whip, net, or lasso by rolling +2 to hit with a sharp weapon and doing 3 hp damage to the entangling weapon.

Appendices Q and R of *Unearthed Arcana* give some useful tactics for the arena. Grappling and overbearing techniques are useful to gladiators with high levels and good dexterity, though weaponless combat is obviously very dangerous against sword-wielding foes. Disarming attacks are recommended to all gladiators.

A major attraction for the spectators is their participation in the games. This occurs when a gladiator holds up one finger to signal defeat and put himself at the mercy of the crowd. Any combatant who feels that he cannot win the fight due to outmatched skill, loss of hit points,

or an undesirable position (such as flat on his back with a trident at his throat) can use this option. By the rules, the victorious man cannot attack unless he is given the signal by the game's official sponsor.

Now the spectators either wave their handkerchiefs in the air to demand mercy or point their thumbs downward to demand the loser's death (Table 2 determines this reaction). For the modifiers, courage can be shown by putting all of one's efforts into a vigorous series of attacks, never pausing unless absolutely necessary, and showing willpower and ferocity at all times. Attacking in every round of the duel is a good example. This bonus does not apply if the fallen man had a strong advantage over his victor, such as a heavily armored fighter against a dagger-wielding criminal. Cowardice is shown by displaying nervousness or hesitation, or by not giving a good fight because of too much interest in one's own life. Anyone who acts too miserably, such as begging or running in fear, automatically receives the crowds' disapproval.

Player characters in the stands can influence the audience's decision by shouting their own opinions before anyone else. If they do this, add one point to the roll if the PCs call for mercy or subtract one point if they call for death.

The sponsor of the game now makes the final decision. Roll again on Table 2. Ignore the modifiers listed there and roll again if there is a mixed decision. New modifiers are +8 if the crowd wants mercy, -8 if the crowd wants an execution, and +6 if the sponsor is renting or owns the gladiator in question. If death is the man's fate, then he must submit honorably to a single, mortal strike from the victorious fighter.

Dead gladiators are picked up by attendants after each duel. These attendants use hot irons (1-3 hp damage) to check the fallen man's condition. A *feign death* spell may deceive them, but anyone using raw courage to pretend death must pass a 6d6 Constitution Check or draw back in pain. Those who fell during the fight can be carried away alive, but the attendants carry hammers to finish those who were condemned to death by the sponsor.

Choosing an opponent

To find an opponent for a PC (or NPC), follow these three steps:

1. If a known PC or NPC is participating in the same game as the PC, there is a chance that they will be set against each other. To get this percentage chance, divide 100 by the number of gladiators participating in the event and ignore any chances below 1%. For example, Arius and Drago are hated enemies who are both fighting in the same game. If 100 men participate in the event, there is a 1%

chance these men will be matched in the pit. If 20 warriors fight in another event, the chance increases to 5%.

2. If the above roll does not provide an opponent, then the gladiator has a 5% chance per level of facing a champion. Roll this chance for each duel. Use Tables 3 and 4 to determine the style and class of the champion. Use Table 5 (not Table 3) for this gladiator's class level. The minimum level for a champion is fifth. This NPC also has modified ability scores (to racial maximums): +3 strength, +2 dexterity, and +3 constitution. These bonuses are awarded because of the warrior's proven toughness and deadliness in the arena.

There is little chance that an 18th-level PC will meet an 18th-level NPC every other duel. It is more likely that several lower-level NPCs will gang up on the PC. For this reason, there is a 75% chance that each time a champion is chosen for a character, there will be more than one average-level gladiator as an opponent rather than one high level opponent. In this instance, use one NPC gladiator per five of the character's levels. These are average NPC gladiators, not champions, and are thus rolled up on Tables 3 and 4.

3. If no opponent has yet been chosen for the PC, then roll up an average NPC gladiator on Tables 3 and 4. Note that Table 4 gives the probable cause of the NPC's participation in the games. In most cases, the gladiators are enslaved. In classical games, a *retiarius* is usually matched against a *mirmillo*, and a *thrax* is usually matched against a *secutor*.

Combat resolution system

For quickly determining the outcome of a one-on-one duel, roll 1d20 for each combatant. Modifiers to the rolls are listed on Table 6. Bonuses are awarded for high physical ability scores, ability level, and fighting styles.

The warrior who gets the higher score wins. A natural roll of 1 means automatic failure and a natural roll of 20 means automatic success. Reroll all ties unless both combatants roll a natural 1 or a natural 20. If both fighters roll a 1, then both roll again; neither has a chance to ask for the crowd's mercy. If both combatants roll a 20, they have both given a good show, and are both considered winners.

The loser's chance to try for mercy equals his charisma times two. If he rolls this chance or less on 1d100, then use the normal rules for determining the audience's and the sponsor's decisions.

If necessary, check the physical condition of the winner and the surviving loser after the fight. Using Table 7, roll 1d10 twice, assigning the higher roll to the winner, the lower to the loser. Ties are not re-rolled; the numbers are assigned as

normal. If the winner has a higher level of ability than the loser, subtract the difference between the two from the loser's die roll. If the loser has a higher level of ability than the winner, subtract this difference from the winner's die roll. If the two are equal in level of ability, the die rolls stand unmodified. Reference these final figures on Table 7 to determine each character's final physical condition. If the loser has been killed in combat, the DM rolls only for the winner, determining his physical condition as described above. The percentages of hit points indicated are applied to each character's actual hit points at the start of the duel, not to his maximum hit points. This takes into account any hits received in combat performed earlier that day or earlier that week.

Rules of the game

It is possible for a PC to devise a seemingly perfect scheme to cheat the following rules of the arena. However, no one should be allowed to fool the system without great risk and eventual doom. DMs can create many ways to foil the player's plans; it should be noted, however, that a change in the situation which throws new challenges at the players is better than an iron fist that simply crushes their schemes.

Punishments for breaking the rules must be decided by the DM, based on the alignment of the sponsor and the intensity of the crime. Punishments can be as merciful as expulsion from the event or as severe as lifting the gates of the animal cages and releasing starving lions into the arena with the offender. Also, enraged gladiators do not hesitate to use their fists or their weapons. Against more dangerous and powerful offenders, DMs can use the soldiers who patrol the amphitheater and guard the game's sponsor.

The following rules apply to all campaign settings unless stated otherwise.

1. *Equipment.* No one is allowed to bring their own equipment into the pit. From the armory in the amphitheater, gladiators receive free use of any armor and weapons appropriate to their style. Characters who have not received training in a style can choose one piece or set of armor: (1) a large shield, (2) a large helmet with visor, or (3) a buckler shield and small helmet. They can also choose one type or set of weapons: (1) a dagger, (2) a whip, (3) a lasso, (4) a short sword or swords, or (5) a net and trident. After the games, all equipment must be returned to the armory; free characters can regain their own equipment after that.

2. *Payment.* Free gladiators and prisoners' owners receive gold for the victories in the duels. To determine the exact

payment, multiply the defeated character's level by 15 gp. The total for the day is paid at the end of each game day. The money goes to a prisoner-gladiator's owner even if the gladiator later dies in the arena. If a free gladiator dies before collecting his pay, the gold stays in the amphitheater treasury.

Payment is not given to participants of massed battle games because it is impossible to determine who has killed whom. For this reason, few prisoner-gladiator owners enter their men into such games; free men almost never do. Massed battles are therefore fought mostly by untrained criminals and war prisoners.

3. *Magic.* Spell use in gladiatorial combat is extremely rare. Most gladiators are simply professional fighters who take pride in their skills, and magic can easily ruin their chances of survival. Anyone caught using spells or magic items draws the wrath of dozens (or hundreds) of angry gladiators. Also, the audience pays to see the fighting skills of the gladiators; thus, magic is considered an unfair advantage that deflates the thrill of the game. This is why all armor and weapons used in the pit must come from the amphitheater's armory.

Any use of magic is a dangerous act. If someone attempts to cast a spell in the arena, there is a good chance that he will be noticed. *Invisibility* and *fireball* spells, for example, are obvious. If a rule-breaker is more subtle (such as using a *bless* spell, a *heal* spell, or a quick cantrip), the chance of being caught depends on the detectability of the spoken component, the material components, and the necessary gestures. There are usually spellcasters in the audience, and these people notice subtle gestures for what they really are. As a side note, it is difficult to cast spells from the stands without drawing the attention of nearby spectators. Also, an unsuspecting gladiator or soldier NPC can "accidentally" discover anyone hiding in a corner with a scroll.

Dungeon Masters can also use "magic police" to seek out illegal spellcasters in the games. An NPC cleric or magic-user can use the 1st-level spell *detect magic* to check the arena before each duel; likewise, several spellcasters can work as a team to hunt down rule-breakers. DMs might even arm their "magic police" with a *staff of the magi* or a *wand of magic detection* and back them up with a dozen heavily armed soldiers. The strength of this deterrent force should be increased only to match the stubbornness and determination of spell-using PCs. Punishment for such crimes may be determined by trial at a later point; such actions usually result in a verdict of guilty, which carries a punishment as severe as the DM wishes to make

it (execution is common). In other instances, the perpetrator may be detained (*held* magically) and offered as a special execution during the gladiatorial games.

4. *Psionics*. The use of psionics in the pit is as strongly restricted as the use of magic. A psionic gladiator can be detected when his opponents continually become wild or zombielike. If a gladiator's foes tell tales of insanity, confusion, sleep, rage, and other effects that struck only during the duel, the authorities may become suspicious. A suspected psionic is immediately banned from the arena, and a proven psionic faces the same punishment as a proven spellcaster.

It is easier to hide psionics use than magic use, but psionics have their own unique dangers. These dangers are called brain moles, cerebral parasites, intellect devourers, and thought eaters (all from the *Monster Manual*). DMs should consider their use against PCs who cannot otherwise be stopped from the illegal use of psionics.

5. *Poison*. Poison is a violation that draws the severest punishments for the same basic reasons as magic use does. The chance of detecting a poisoned weapon is noted in the *Players Handbook* in the assassin's class description. Since sheaths are rarely used for weapons, many people coming within 10' of any weapon notice any poison. The rule-breaker's opponents have a good chance of detecting poison and will shout for justice. Poison use is too dishonorable and risky for any wise gladiator to attempt.

6. *Missile combat*. Very rarely should missiles be used in the arena (a PC *retiarius* can throw the net and trident if he wants, but an NPC *retiarius* holds both weapons, swinging one end of the net to catch an arm or leg, and stabbing with the trident). One reason is that the sport is designed to display melee fighting skills; archery contests are another game altogether. Another reason is that battles must be confined to the arena, negating the chance of accidental injury to the politicians who sit close to the pit. Also, a wise emperor or warlord would not want to test the gladiators' loyalty by putting himself in spear or arrow range of them. Many prisoner-gladiators would enjoy the chance to strike at a spectator, a guard, or the sponsor, all of whom are out of sword range from the arena (remember the trident-throwing gladiator from the movie *Spartacus*?).

The medieval arena

The main difference between classical and medieval games lies in the equipment which the gladiators use. Armor is still kept to a minimum, DMs can provide the fighters with any armor and weapons

common to the AD&D game (see Table 8 for suggested equipment). For random levels of opponents, roll 1d6 -2 (minimum of 1) or 1d6 + 3 for opponents of upper-level characters.

Medieval guards often carry longbows when they patrol the amphitheaters. Long distance weapons put them at a strong advantage over the gladiators, decreasing the chances of rebellion. The guards also tend to avoid close contact with prisoner-gladiators so that the prisoners have little chance of acquiring missile weapons.

The Oriental arena

Oriental gladiatorial games need rules that are not necessary in classical games.

First, Table 2 cannot be used because no honorable Oriental character asks for mercy from a crowd of strangers (such behavior only draws the crowds wrath anyway).

Second, opponents gain or lose honor more intensely because of the presence of an audience. Double all honor point adjustments (+ or -) at the end of each duel.

Third, special social problems arise in the organization of the gladiators. Whereas warriors mix freely with criminals in classical games, Oriental characters are not so open minded. What honorable samurai would willingly duel against a murderer-peasant? Why would a fighter re-enter combat with a war prisoner whom he previously defeated in battle?

Because of these social problems, Oriental games are divided into two types:

1. *Games of Honor*. These games are held when someone offers prizes to "the best warriors in the land." If money is offered to the winners, award them four ch'ien per level of the losers. Other prizes can include positions in the military, weapons of quality, marriage to a maiden of virtue (for suitable duellists only, of course), or anything else the DM prefers.

Valuable offers attract volunteers from all over the country. The bulk of this gladiatorial mass is made up of bushi, kensai, and ronin samurai. Regular samurai are restricted from the games because lords do not want their retainers to die uselessly in such contests; thus, no permission to compete in these events will be granted.

The duels are conducted in the same general manner as in classical games. They are fought until death or until one character surrenders to the other. Though no armor is permitted, each combatant is allowed to wield his own weapons. Thus, most of the weapons used are swords, naginatas, and spears. For the class level of an NPC opponent, roll 1d6 + 3.

2. *Games of Dishonor*. These games are held when a lord stages combat between criminals (especially captured bandits) or when a victorious military commander

stages combat between prisoners of war. The main purposes of such games are punishment and execution.

Combatants are typically barbarians (uncommon), bushi (common), kensai (very rare), monks (rare), disheartened samurai (very rare), and yakuza (rare). When these men are armed, the arena is surrounded by as many swordsmen and archers as possible to prevent violence outside the arena. Furthermore, the sponsor of the game is almost always an upper-level fighter, just in case a gladiator dares to challenge him to enter the arena for a duel.

Samurai-gladiators are almost nonexistent in games of dishonor. To capture samurai warriors is very difficult, since most of them kill themselves before being taken prisoner. (As a side note, a character who wishes to commit hara-kiri must roll a 4d6 Wisdom Check, adding his honor score divided by ten. A successful check means automatic death, and failure means double damage taken from the weapon. A character can attempt this check once per round.) To force samurai unwillingly into a duel is nearly impossible, since they have a habit of ignoring their chosen opponents and attacking the guards and sponsor of the event. In this way, samurai-gladiators usually die in a hail of arrows before bowing to their captors' wishes. Other character classes might also be rebellious, but it is the samurai class which reacts with such predictable and violent stubbornness.

Gladiators of dishonorable games are treated poorly and often ridiculed. Loss of honor is a strong influence, since each gladiator has either been accused of a crime (-4 points) or taken prisoner (-10 points). In addition, to fight in such a game costs a criminal -2 honor points per duel, and costs a war prisoner -1 honor points per duel. These penalties are given in addition to the doubled honor point adjustments previously mentioned.

The gladiators wear no armor. War prisoners fight with the weapons of the battlefield, such as daggers, swords, naginatas, and spears, while criminals fight with more exotic weapons. Consult Table 9 for the arming of Oriental criminal-gladiators. For class levels of all dishonorable gladiators, roll 1d6 - 1.

All dishonorable duels are fought to the death, and all psychic duels must lead to actual combat, not a retreat by the loser. Oriental spectators accept nothing less than an all-out attempt to win by both combatants.

Winners of the games are occasionally set free. After a fight, divide the victor's honor score by 10 and then roll 3d10. If the rolled number matches the adjusted honor score or less, then the prisoner is

allowed to leave — without weapons, armor, money, or other possessions. There is no gaining of honor for being set free. Freed gladiators tend to slip away quickly and quietly, ashamed of their previous captivity.

Battle variations

The first priority of gladiatorial games is their ability to entertain and excite an audience. For this reason, some interesting variations are described below.

1. *Blind combat.* In this type of duel, the combatants enter the arena and face each other at close range. Then they put on their helmets, which have sealed visors that cover their eyes. Each opponent attacks at -4 “to hit,” unless he has blind-fighting proficiency as described in the *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide*. NPC gladiators each have a 1% chance per level of having this proficiency. A blinded gladiator cannot ask for mercy from the audience, since his opponent will not see the plea and thus continues to attack.

2. *Mounted combat.* Gladiators occasionally fight from the backs of light war-horses. Riding proficiency is necessary for all horsemen. Classical fighters typically carry small shields and short swords, and sometimes (30% chance per match), all horsemen in the duel wear leather armor.

The most effective way for a horseman to fight other riders with hand-to-hand weapons is to circle around his opponents, striking whenever possible. Every round, each rider makes a riding check to get himself into position for an attack. When only two riders are fighting, each check receives a +5 bonus. A character can attempt this check only once per round; if successful, he can choose whichever opponent he wants to attack. Only two riders can attack a single opponent at one time, and both attackers must make their riding checks as described.

If two characters make successful checks and attack each other, they roll for initiative for that round; in this instance, both characters face each others' shield sides.

When a horseman makes a successful riding check against one who fails the check, roll on Table 10 to determine which side the attacker is facing. Use 1d8 if the defender has only one opponent; 1d10 if the defender has two or more opponents.

Table 10 gives the following possible targets:

Shield side. The defender adds his shield bonus (if any) to his armor class.

Front. The defender adds his shield bonus (if any) to his AC, and can return an attack in that round at -4 “to hit.”

Weapon side. The defender receives no shield bonus to his AC, but can return an attack in that round at -2 “to hit.”

Rear. The attacker strikes at +2 “to hit.” The defender receives no dexterity or shield bonus to his AC.

If a mounted gladiator fights against an opponent on foot, use the rules for mounted combat in the DSG.

3. *Blind mounted combat.* Chaos results when mounted gladiators are ordered to wear helmets with blinding visors. During melee, each horseman rolls a riding proficiency to avoid slamming his horse into other horses. This check is made at -4, with an additional -2 per participating horseman after two. When horses collide, the riders must pass riding checks or fall to the ground, suffering 1-3 hp damage.

For combat, use the rules for mounted combat previously described, except that the checks made to position the riders for their attacks are made at -5. Randomly determine which rider each character is attacking. Blinded duellists strike at -4 “to hit.” In this form of combat, blind combat proficiencies also apply.

4. *Bridge combat.* A bridge can be constructed in the arena on which gladiators can fight on (see the DSG rules for fighting on a bridge). Usually, there is only enough width for one size-M character and enough length for 20 size-M characters. DMs can widen the bridge so that two combatants can stand side by side, or shrink it so that a gladiator must make a Dexterity Check each round to keep from falling.

One of two landing spots is typically set up beneath the bridge. The first is a pit of red-hot coals and burning wood, which immediately kills anyone who falls into it. The second is a bed of spikes. Unfortunate characters fall onto 1-6 razor-sharp blades, each causing 1d8 hp damage. Because of the deadliness of bridge combat, only expendable lower-level gladiators are sent into such duels.

5. *Mass battles.* Small gladiatorial armies can fight in the arena. The DM needs the BATTLESYSTEM™ Fantasy Combat Supplement to stage these tiny wars.

Classical games usually involve a large group of lightly armed gladiators and a small group of heavily armed gladiators — for example, 20 samnites fighting 40 retiarii.

The battle lasts until one side is eliminated, unless units are sent in to replace those which are lost. There is no random way to determine such things as the number of participants, the strength of each unit, or if replacements are used. These decisions are left to the DM.

Mob units are used for untrained gladiators and zero-level criminals. These units have no commander, since they have simply been given weapons and then pushed into the arena. Being unwilling fighters, they have an Initial Morale rating of 8.

Regular units are used for trained gladiators. Since these warriors are individualists and not group fighters, they have an Initial Discipline rating of 4. For the same reason, a Brigade Commander is rarely seen in the pit. More likely, Unit Commanders lead the gladiatorial groups. Several Unit Commanders can be allies on the same side, but they move and fight without relation to each other. Also, no morale checks or fighting withdrawals are allowed to regular units, since all participants fight to the death.

Cavalry and chariot units can be used sparingly in the 200'-diameter pit. However, fire attacks are rarely used because smoke blocks the spectators' views and chokes many of them. Artillery is also prohibited, since a rebellious crew might decide to launch a flaming boulder into the audience or at the sponsor's platform.

Table 11 in the BATTLESYSTEM rule booklet gives a possibility that a PC or NPC body becomes “lost.” Ignore this ruling in the arena. All dead characters lay “on the field” for recovery.

6. *Sea battles.* Gladiatorial naval combat was occasionally seen in Ancient Rome. These battles were sometimes held on a pond or lake, but the rules given here are to be used when the arena itself is flooded with water. Game sponsors find it less expensive to use small ships than to buy war galleys that are rammed, burned, and possibly sunk.

The arena is filled with water that is chest-deep to size-M characters. This depth allows the use of raft-ships, and also prevents the meaningless (and, for the audience, boring) drowning of gladiators. Merciless DMs can place sharks (or worse!) into the water to keep the fighters on their toes. In such a case, each character in the water has a 20% chance per round of being attacked by a creature in the water.

Small, oared ships are manned by teams of 10 gladiators, often all in the same fighting style, and led by the man with the highest class level. Roll on Table 1, 8, or 9 to randomly determine a team's style. The boats have 2-5 hull points each, are 15-20' long, 6-8' wide, and travel at rowboat speed. In each battle, 1d6 + 6 boat teams participate, and the battle lasts until gladiators from only one team are able to continue.

BATTLESYSTEM rules are useful to resolve combat. A unit (or boat team) is made up of a single counter. There are no Heroes unless a PC is the only survivor of the team, since a gladiator who willingly sets out on his own is considered a traitor and is treated like an enemy by his own team. If a PC or important NPC is in a unit that gets eliminated, consult Table 11 for

(continued on page 18)

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Gladiatorial Tables

Table 1

Random Classical Style

1-5	Retiarius
6-9	Thrace
10-11	Dimachare
12-15	Secutor
16-18	Mirmillo
19-20	Samnite

Modifiers:

- +1 per 2 strength points
- 1 per 2 dexterity points

Table 2

Mercy or Death

1-10	Thumbs down
11-14	Mixed decision
15-20	Waved handkerchiefs

Modifiers:

- +6 for courage
- +4 for defeated champion
- +1 per 2 levels above 2nd of the defeated gladiator
- 4 for gladiators without proper training
- 10 for cowardice

Table 3

Gladiator's Style and Level

1-18	Retiarius, level 1d6 - 2*
19-36	Thrace, level 1d6 - 2
37-48	Dimachare, level 1d6 - 2
49-66	Secutor, level 1d8 - 2
67-84	Mirmillo, level 1d8 - 2
85-95	Samnite, level 1d3 +4
96-00	Hoplomache, level 1d3 +4

* Minimum level of 1 for all gladiators on this table

Table 4

Gladiator's Character Class

1-5	Assassin (criminal)
6-15	Thief (criminal)
16-30	Ranger or Cavalier (50% either; war prisoner)
31-50	Barbarian (war prisoner)
51-00	Fighter (criminal, war prisoner, or volunteer)

Table 5

Champion's Level

1-2	PC's level -6
3-4	PC's level -4
5-9	PC's level -1d4
10-11	Same as PC's level
12-17	PC's level + 1d4
18-20	PC's level + 1d4 + 2

Modifier:

- 1 per 3 levels above 12th level (of the PC)

Table 6

Modifiers to the Combat Resolution System

- +2 per level
- + 1 per 2 strength points
- +1 per 2 dexterity points
- + 1 per 3 constitution points
- 6 for unarmed combatants
- 3 for retiarii
- +3 for secutors and mirmillones
- + 6 for hoplomachi and samnites without torso armor
- + 9 for hoplomachi and samnites with torso armor

Table 7

Gladiator's Physical Condition

1	25% of full hp
2-4	50% of full hp
5-8	75% of full hp
9-0	100% of full hp

Table 8

Random Medieval Equipment

1	Club, studded leather armor
2	Halberd, no armor
3	Harpoon, leather armor
4	Lasso, dagger, leather armor
5	Long sword, large shield
6	Two-handed sword, no armor

Table 9

Random Oriental Equipment

1	Bo stick
2	Chain, dagger
3	2 kamas
4	Lasso, dagger
5	Man catcher
6	Nunchaku
7	2 tiger claws (as nekodes)
8	2 tui-fas
9	Wakizashi
10	Whip, dagger

Table 10

Defender's Target Side

1-3	Shield side
4-6	Front
7-8	Weapon side
9-10	Rear

Table 11

Fate of PC/NPC in Eliminated Unit

1	Character is killed and on boat
2-3	Character is killed and in water
4-5	Character is uninjured, but unconscious for 1-10 game turns
6-7	Character is badly injured (1-6 hp remaining) and is now a Hero
8-10	Character loses 1-12 hp and is now a Hero

Table 12

Modifiers in the Chariot Race

- + 2 per charioteering proficiency level
- + 1 per 2 wisdom points over 12
- +12 if in 1st place in the previous lap
- +6 if in 2nd place in the previous lap
- +3 if in 3rd place in the previous lap

Table 13

Chariot Disaster

1-8	Extreme strain on chariot
9-14	Chariot hits other chariot
15-18	Chariot overturns
19-20	Horses collide

the character's fate. For other general rules, consult battle variation 5.

Players lacking the BATTLESYSTEM rules can resolve the game by determining that one boat team must face 1d4 +2 other teams in the course of the battle. This roll is from the viewpoint of a single team, preferably one in which a PC is a member. The first enemy team contains 10 gladiators and all others contain 1d6 +4 gladiators. After the first enemy team is passed,

roll on Table 7 for the physical condition of the next opponents. Fighting can be resolved with normal melee combat rules or with the combat resolution system previously described.

Special rules apply to melee combat on the small ships. First of all, boarding an enemy vessel is extremely dangerous. There are no ropes or grappling hooks to secure one deck to another. The fighters simply ram their boats together (no ram

damage to hull values) and leap onto the enemy decks. Anyone who crosses from one boat to another must pass a 1d20 Dexterity Check or fall into the water. Of course, it is easier to, wait for an opponent to make the jump, but gladiators prefer to show ferocity by going on the offensive, not the defensive.

A character can throw an opponent into the water by using an overbearing attack (see *Unearthed Arcana* for updated rules

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on weaponless combat). If the attack is successful, then the opponent must pass a save vs. death or fall overboard. If the save is successful, then the opponent is merely thrown onto the deck.

A character who falls off a boat must make a save vs. paralyzation to get a breath of air before hitting the water (see the swimming rules in the *DSG*). In most cases this is not necessary, but if a character is entangled by a net or continuous melee combat in the water, a breath of air might save his life.

A character who falls into the water and is entangled by a net must pass a 1d20 Dexterity Check to free himself. This check can be attempted once per round, but the character cannot stand up and raise his head above water until he is free of the net.

A size-M character who fights in the water suffers a penalty of -2 "to hit" and -2 damage on all rolls.

A character in the water with zero hit points will drown unless helped. One who lost his last hit point on a boat must make a save vs. death or fall overboard. If he passes the check, he collapses on the deck. See the *DSG* for rules on drowning.

Chariot races

Chariot races, though not a part of the gladiatorial games, are worth mentioning. In ancient Rome, the races were as popular as the arena duels.

Charioteering proficiency (from the *Wilderness Survival Guide*) is not necessary for PC racers, but all NPC racers have this proficiency. To determine an NPC's level of proficiency, roll 1d4-2 (minimum of 1) in minor games or 1d6-2 (minimum of 1) in major and Imperial games.

The setting of the races is the hippodrome, an oblong structure shaped like two horseshoes connected at the ends. The original Hippodrome was 2,000' long, 500' wide, and held an audience of 150,000. A long barrier ran down the middle of the oblong arena to divide it into a double-horseshoe-shaped track. The sandy track was about 0.36 miles long, or 0.72 miles per lap. DMs can use these figures for their own racing arenas.

Admission prices to a hippodrome are the same as for amphitheater seating. Up to 25 different races can be held in one day. The event begins with a parade of the competitors, led by the sponsor in a golden chariot, and accompanied by rousing trumpet music. Each chariot is drawn by four medium war horses tied side by side. Soon, the first four racers are lined up at one end of the track. They are arranged so that none has a head start on the others.

The sponsor gives a speech and then raises a white cloth. When he drops the

cloth, the race begins. The crowd roars as the chariots circle the track, and the drivers try to cut each other off around the corners, risking deadly collisions. Each lap lasts one full round, and seven or nine laps (DM's choice) make one complete race.

Each driver is tied to the reigns so that he will not be thrown from the chariot. Those who prefer to ride freely must pass a 1d20 Dexterity Check each lap or be thrown for 1-4 hp damage. Drivers carry daggers to cut the reigns in case of an emergency.

Finally, the surviving chariots reach the last lap and hurry across a chalk-drawn finish line. If there is a tie, the sponsor decides who is the winner. Each character who finished in first place adds 1d20 to his charisma score. Ties are rerolled, and the highest final score wins the sponsor's favor.

A victim of a disaster (detailed later) in the last lap can win the race, but must be tied to the horses as they cross the finish line. If he does not live through it, the next charioteer in line claims victory. If an undamaged chariot finishes at the same time as an overturned chariot, the driver of the undamaged vehicle is the winner. Drivers in a pile-up cannot win a race, giving the possibility that no one is victorious in that race.

After the winner (or lack of winner) is announced, the track is cleared of wreckage, and the next racers are called to the starting line. At the end of the event, each winner is given his prize before the cheering audience. A prize of 500 gold pieces is a common reward for each winner in major and imperial games.

Race winners also receive experience points for each victory. To get the experience-point amount, add up the charioteering proficiency levels of all of the winner's competitors in that race, and multiply that number by 10. NPCs can thus advance in proficiency levels, and PCs can receive class levels for their triumphs.

To conduct the race itself, each participant rolls 1d20 once per lap. The highest roll gets first place, the second highest roll gets second place, etc. Ties hold the same place in order — they are side by side. Modifiers to this roll are listed on Table 12. Follow this procedure in every lap of the race (adding totals to determine whether a racer gains, maintains, or loses position) until the last lap is finished and a winner is declared (this is usually determined by which racer has the highest total).

Charioteers receive an additional +5 bonus for cutting each other off, but have a chance of disaster if they take this option. If a character uses this modifier and rolls a natural 4 or less, consult Table 13 for the result. Each result is explained below.

Extreme strain on chariot. The vehicle comes under considerable stress. There is a 40% chance that the axle snaps or the wheels break off. When this happens, the chariot overturns.

Chariot hits other chariot. The character who rolled the disaster accidentally rams his vehicle into the one beside his (if two chariots are side by side for that lap) or into the next one up the line. Use the line of order from the previous lap, since that order determines the competitor the character was attempting to cut off. Each driver involved in this occurrence must make a successful charioteering proficiency check or his vehicle overturns.

Chariot overturns. The vehicle rolls over and falls apart. The horses, however, continue to run. The driver must make a 1d20 Dexterity Check to cut the reigns to which he is tied.

If the check is successful, the character falls to the ground for 1-4 hp damage. Anyone standing on the track must then pass a 1d20 Dexterity Check for each chariot behind him; otherwise, the character is run over for 3-18 hp damage per chariot.

If the check to cut the reigns is failed, the character is dragged for one round before he frees himself, suffering 2-8 hp damage. If a chariot is racing behind a dragged character, there is a 40% chance that the horses' hooves trample him for 3-18 more points. An overturned chariot and its driver cannot continue to race after the lap is finished.

Horses collide. The character who rolled the disaster has driven his horses into the horses of the chariot beside him (if any) or into the horses ahead of him. There is a 75% chance of a pile-up. When this happens, the vehicles crash together, each horse takes 2-12 hp damage and each driver takes 3-18 hp damage. A driver heading toward the pileup in the same round as the crash must make a successful charioteering check or join the pile-up, taking similar damage on himself and his horses, and causing 2-12 more hp damage to characters already in the pile-up. All chariots in a pile-up can no longer continue to race.

Last note

The best way for a free adventurer to make a profit in the fighting circle or in chariot racing is to try a few duels, take the gold, and then stay out for a while. The odds are against anyone who enters the pit or the hippodrome too many times, and every attempt can be as dangerous as the last one. Only the toughest fighters, with high strength, dexterity, and constitution scores, should consider making a career of it. But, for those who are daring, fame and fortune await them! Ω

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“Surely, You Joust!”

The “game” of chivalry and knighthood for AD&D® games

by **Leonard Carpenter**

When words such as “cavalier” or “chivalry” are mentioned, most gamers conjure up a mental image of armored knights jousting in a grand medieval tournament. Although the cavalier class is now an official part of the AD&D® game, jousting is an area of combat not clearly defined by the official rules. In this article, jousting combat and tournament jousting are described.

This article is not historical essay. In some cases, strict historical accuracy is sacrificed for the sake of game balance and playability. Those wishing to know more about medieval tournaments and knighthood can look for some of the books mentioned at the end of this article. Footnotes are provided to cite the sources of some of the ideas presented, both to satisfy the curiosity of the readers and the nit-picking of the editors. [Thanks. — The editors]

These jousting suggestions describe two events not specifically covered by the existing combat rules of the *Dungeon Masters Guide*: the possibility of a knight being unhorsed by the lance charge and the probability of the lance being broken or “shivered” when it strikes an armored knight. Both events are handled by saving throws of differing complexity. The complexity of either saving throw is up to the DM’s desire for “game realism.” Various modifiers are suggested that may be applied to the saving throws; which modifiers are actually used is up to each DM. The example provided below uses a number of modifiers to illustrate the joust at a moderate degree of complexity. The example takes the reader step by step through jousting combat, to make the details clear to the reader.

The lance charge

The charging rules that apply to the joust are discussed on page 66 of the DMG. These lance-charge rules are summarized and expanded upon below.

No dexterity bonus to armor class is allowed for a charging knight. If a knight

has no dexterity bonus, then the knight charges at one armor class worse (e.g., AC 0 becomes AC 1).

A charging knight is +2 to hit for the attack at the end of the charge. The longer lance always strikes first. If lance lengths are equal, then the attacks occur simultaneously. All damage rolls and saving throws vs. unhorsing and vs. shivering also take place simultaneously.

A lance does double damage at the end of a charge attack. A pike, spear, and certain pole arms score double damage when set to receive a charging knight (see the footnotes on page 27 of *Unearthed Arcana* to see which weapons cause double damage for a charge).

A charging horse moves at a rate 50% greater than its base movement rate. Unless the horse can accelerate up to charging speed, no charge bonuses for the “to hit” roll or lance damage are gained.

Terrain may prevent a horse from moving at charging speed. Only firm, level ground is suitable for the joust. Rocky ground, overgrown plants or brush, marshy or muddy turf, or shifting sand may prevent a horse from charging. If the terrain is hazardous or unsafe, the horse must make a saving throw vs. petrification to avoid falling if the horse tries to charge. If the horse falls, both horse and rider take 1d6 hp of damage in the mishap.

Only one charge every 10 rounds is possible in combat. The horse must be allowed to rest or be limited to non-running movement during the intervening nine rounds. Otherwise, the horse is unable to charge again in the 10th round.

In the controlled environment of the tourney joust, it is suggested that a DM allow the horse to charge once every three rounds, provided the horse is allowed to rest completely between each charge and



can rest for at least three turns between each jousting match. The suggested addition applies to the civilized tournament conditions only and not to actual combat or fierce jousting matches not rigidly controlled by tourney judges. Any civilized tournament joust that degenerates into true combat must abide by the "one charge per turn" restriction of the official rules.

Cavalier's bonuses

The cavalier gains some impressive bonuses in the joust. A cavalier gains a "to hit" bonus with the lance, starting at +1 at 1st level and increasing by +1 every six levels. A cavalier also attacks at one level higher when mounted. A cavalier gains a damage bonus of +1 with the lance for every level of experience. Strength and magic bonuses may also accrue.

A typical knight, such as a 6th-level cavalier with 17 strength, would be +4 "to hit" with the lance charge. The cavalier would gain a +2 charge bonus, +1 bonus due to lance skill at 6th level, and +1 for the 17 strength. A 13th-level cavalier with 18/00 strength would gain +3 bonuses for both lance skill and strength, and would be +8 "to hit," even without the benefit of magic.

A cavalier can do tremendous damage with the lance. The lance charge inflicts double lance damage, and the cavalier damage and strength bonus also apply. Totalling up these bonuses, a 6th-level cavalier with 17 strength would do:

$$(2 \times (2d4 + 1)) + 6 + 1 = 13 \text{ to } 25 \text{ hp of damage.}$$

Obviously, the lance charge is a deadly attack form, even at low to middle levels. A high-level cavalier with a girdle of *giant strength* and a *rod of lordly might* is a "Monty Haul" player's dream in this respect.

Because of the many attack bonuses that may be applied, a DM may choose to ignore the weapon-versus-armor class bonus of the heavy horse lance. The +4 bonus of a heavy horse lance vs. plate armor (see *Unearthed Arcana*, page 27), combined with the aforementioned bonuses, might make the cavalier's lance charge too powerful for many campaigns. A DM interested in maintaining game balance might wish to moderate the great power of the lance charge.

The lance

Lances used in the joust come in a variety of styles. To reduce the chance of a serious injury in a medieval tournament, the lance's spear point was replaced by a blunt head called a coronel or cronel. Hollow or very fragile lances were used in the courteous 15th and 16th century tournament pageants, usually in the opening charge of a general melee¹ (see below). Naturally, a fragile lance would always have a blunt head.

Blunted and fragile lances do reduced damage in the jousts, as the table below illustrates. Blunted and fragile lances never gain any weapon-versus-armor class

bonus, since they lack a spear point. If a weapon-versus-AC modifier is routinely used by the DM, then a blunted lance is treated at -4 "to hit" vs. hard armor (AC 5 or better), in addition to the listed modifier of the "Armor Class Adjustments" table (*Unearthed Arcana*, page 27). In this way, the +4 bonus of a heavy horse lance vs. plate armor is cancelled out. If the weapon-versus-AC modifier is not used in lance combat, then the blunted lance penalty is ignored and the lance attack is conducted normally.

Table 1 illustrates the suggested base damage values for blunted and fragile lances for each size of lance.

Table 1
Types of Lances

Lance Type	Length	Damage Range		
		Sharp	Blunt	Fragile
Light horse	10'	1-6	1-2	1
Medium horse	12'	2-7	1-3	1-2
Heavy horse	14'	3-9	1-4	1-2

Any time a lance scores a hit vs. a hard target, the lance must make a saving throw to avoid shivering. This "save vs. shivering" is required whenever the lance scores a hit against a sturdy shield or metal armor of AC 5 or better (chain mail or stronger). This save vs. shivering is handled as a "save vs. crushing blow" with the lance treated as thin wood (*DMG*, page 80).

Normally, a lance would need to make a saving throw roll of 13 or better to avoid shivering. If the knight struck by the lance remains firm in the saddle rather than being unhorsed by the lance charge (see below), then the lance saves vs. shivering at -2.

A fragile lance automatically shivers when a hit is scored. When a fragile lance hits, it inflicts *only* the doubled base damage; no other damage bonuses are applied. Damage bonuses due to strength or a cavalier's lance skill are not applied, since the fragile lance is unable to inflict great damage. The lance's fragility renders it unable to transfer the kinetic energy of the collision to the knight who is struck (much like hitting a cowboy actor over the head with a prop bottle made from sugar). Thus, a fragile lance would inflict 2-4 hp of damage at most to a foe, regardless of the attacker's strength or lance skill.

A magic lance, even a simple lance +1, should be nearly impossible to shiver in the common joust. A save vs. shivering roll should be needed only for an impact greater than a normal jousting collision, perhaps when great magic that increases strength or total collision damage is involved. No magic-user would bother creating a lance +2 if that lance merely had a



+ 2 bonus to save vs. shivering in a common joust.

Magic armor may impose a penalty to the lance's save vs. shivering if the lance strikes magic armor or a magic shield. This penalty would be equal to the negation of the armor's total magical plusses. For instance, a lance that strikes a foe wearing +2 armor and a +2 shield would suffer a penalty to the save vs. shivering of -4, since the magic of both the shield and the armor contribute to the protection of the knight from the lance.

Plate armor can absorb some of the damage done by the lance charge (see *Unearthed Arcana*, pages 75-76, 104). For purposes of determining plate armor damage absorption, consider a lance's base damage range to be a one-hit-die attack, and the double damage of a lance charge to be a two-hit-dice attack. The blow from a fragile lance, however, is always considered to be a one-hit-die attack.

Saving throw vs. unhorsing

Any time a knight is struck by the lance in a mounted charge, there is the possibility that the knight will be unhorsed by the charge. Thus, any time a hit is scored in the joust, the knight struck must make a saving throw to avoid being unhorsed. Although this save could be as simple as any other saving throw in the game, it is more interesting to base this save vs. unhorsing on the character abilities, skills, and experience of the joust. The following system uses various modifiers that affect the chance a knight has to avoid being overthrown by the lance charge.

This system differs from the unhorsing rules on pages 99-100 of *Oriental Adventures*. As the lance charge is such a powerful attack, any successful hit has the potential to unhorse a foe, not just a "critical hit" as in *Oriental Adventures*. Since hits are so common in the joust, the saving throw for knights should not be excessively difficult. Just how easy or difficult the save vs. unhorsing should be is a matter for each DM to decide.

As of yet, there is no provision for cavaliers and paladins to fill proficiency slots. With horsemanship proficiency, as samurai are able to do. The western knight's save vs. unhorsing is considered a form of horsemanship ability intrinsic to the cavalier class. Cavaliers, paladins, and certain fighters are trained from birth to learn to avoid being overthrown in the joust. Thus, the save vs. unhorsing progression naturally improves steadily as the knight increases in level.

This system is restricted to jousting combat only and does not apply to any weapon other than the horse lance. For any other weapon used against a mounted

foe, the system in *Oriental Adventures* should be used.

In this system, a knight who is struck by the lance charge (referred to as the "defender") must make a saving throw to avoid being unhorsed. The saving throw progression used by the DM should be a fairly difficult one for fighter classes, such as the "save vs. rod" or "save vs. spell" categories. A few important modifiers can be applied to this saving throw.

An alternate choice is to use a form of "horsemanship proficiency" roll as used in *Oriental Adventures*. For western knights, this save vs. unhorsing progression starts at 19 at 1st level and improves by one for every two levels gained by the knight. For instance, the saving throw roll is 19 at 1st to 2nd level, 18 at 3rd to 4th level, 17 at 5th to 6th level, and so on. This difficult save vs. unhorsing progression may be used in the joust, along with a fair number of bonuses or penalties to the save. The same progression may be used, at the DM's option, whenever a horsemanship proficiency roll is needed by a knight. This roll can be used by cavaliers or paladins to determine the chance of success in a feat of horsemanship, just as samurai are able to do, as described in *Oriental Adventures* on page 54.

Certain bonuses may be applied to the save vs. unhorsing roll in the joust. These bonuses to the defender's saving throw are based on the knight's character abilities, horsemanship skill, and magic protection. The "attacker" who strikes the defender in the joust imposes penalties to the defender's saving throw, due to the attacker's strength and possible use of a magic lance. The attacker's penalties are applied to the defender's normal save vs. unhorsing roll to find the final saving throw the defender must make to remain in the saddle.

This system assumes that jousting combat is limited to cavaliers, paladins, and occasionally to other fighters. Only cavaliers, paladins, and those fighters with experience in mounted combat are allowed a save vs. unhorsing roll in the joust. Any character with little or no experience or ability in mounted combat will avoid being unhorsed by rolling a natural 20 only, with no bonuses applied to the roll. Those characters who must roll a natural 20 to save include magic-users, thieves, clerics, zero-level characters, and any others that the DM feels would have little chance of weathering a powerful lance charge.

Some suggested bonuses and penalties to the save are described below. To be consistent, bonuses are always expressed as a positive number and penalties as a negative value. How many or how few modifiers a DM wishes to use is a matter of

personal taste based on the DM's desire for "realism." A DM who wishes a quick and easy system should limit the saving throw to a few important modifiers that are applied to a fairly difficult saving throw. The DM who wants to reflect the skill and abilities of both knights may decide to use the full range of the following modifiers, and perhaps some modifiers of the DM's own invention.

The DM should experiment freely with the system. The DM can tinker with various modifiers and saving throw progressions until a system that seems most fair and balanced is found. If hits occur frequently in the joust, then an easier save vs. unhorsing progression could be used. Less frequent lance hits may warrant a more difficult save. If bonuses are heavily favored over penalties, then a more difficult save may be needed, such as the save vs. spell or the horsemanship proficiency progression. Fewer bonuses may call for an easier save, such as the save vs. rods or an even easier save.

Defender's bonuses

Defender's strength — High strength helps a knight avoid being overthrown by the attacker's lance charge. The defender's hit probability bonus due to high strength is used as the bonus to the defender's save vs. unhorsing. Thus, cavaliers of strength 17/xx to 19/00 would gain a bonus of +1 to +3 to the cavalier's save vs. unhorsing.

Defender's dexterity — High dexterity helps a knight remain in the saddle. The knight's reaction/attacking adjustment bonus is used as the defender's saving throw bonus. Cavaliers of dexterity 16/xx to 18/xx gain a bonus of +1 to +3 to the save vs. unhorsing.

Horsemanship skill — Superior horsemanship grants a defender a better chance to avoid falling off the mount. Cavaliers of 1st to 6th level gain a bonus of +1. Cavaliers of 7th level and higher save at +2.

Other characters that are deemed by the DM to be superior horsemen may be granted a +1 bonus to save in the joust. Any character given this bonus by the DM must have some experience jousting. This bonus does not apply to barbarians, samurai, or other oriental horsemen with horsemanship proficiency, as jousting is such an alien method of combat to them.

Magical protection — Magic armor worn by a knight can provide a bonus to the save equal to the total magical plusses of the knight's armor and shield. The saving throw bonus is applied to the defender's chance to save, just as bonuses are applied to other saving throws that may benefit from magic armor (see page 81 of the DMG).

Fragile lances — If a knight is struck by a fragile or hollow lance rather than a

sturdy lance, then the save is made at +4.

Females — Although female fighters are considered to be at a disadvantage in most melee situations, jousting is one form of combat where a case can be made for a slight female advantage. Female knights gain a +1 to save vs. unhorsing due to their low center of gravity. A woman's center of gravity is located in her hips, while a man's is higher up in his abdomen. As women have a smaller percentage of total body weight located above the waist compared to men, female knights are less likely to be knocked off-balance by a lance blow to the upper body.²

Attackers penalties

Attacker's strength — An attacker with great strength who strikes a lance blow causes the defender to save vs. being unhorsed at a penalty. This penalty is equal to the *negative* of the attacker's hit probability adjustment due to high strength. Characters of strength 17/xx to 18/00 impose a penalty of -1 to -3 to the defender's save vs. unhorsing.

Magic lances — Magic lances impose a penalty to the defender's chance to save. This penalty is equal to the negative of the lance's magical plus; for example, a lance +2 imposes a -2 penalty to the defender's save.

Once the DM decides on the applicable modifiers and the proper saving throw progression, the save vs. unhorsing data can become part of a cavalier's permanent character record. After a cavalier character has recorded his or her save vs. unhorsing roll and the attack penalty that he or she imposes upon the opponent's save, the joust can be conducted quickly.

Two abbreviations are used to list the total modifiers involved. The defender's total bonus to the save vs. unhorsing is called the "DBU." The DBU can be considered analogous to the armor-class adjustment of a character. The attacker's total penalty to the opponent's save vs. unhorsing is called the "APU." The APU is similar to the "hit probability" of a character.

If greater simplicity is desired, the DM could ignore the APU business and simply use a more difficult saving throw progression, along with whatever bonuses that may be applied. If this system seems confusing right now, don't worry; an example is provided below.

The fall

Any jousting who is overthrown by the lance charge takes an additional 1d4 hp damage from the fall, due to both the height of the fall and the awkward and uncontrolled manner of the fall. Any knight reduced to zero or fewer hit points by the lance blow is automatically unhorsed, of course, with no save vs.

unhorsing roll allowed. If a knight is automatically unhorsed, then the additional 1d4 of damage may be ignored by the DM, as the small damage taken in the fall would be minor compared to the critical injury suffered by the knight. If the knight is wearing plate armor, the armor may absorb part of the falling damage taken by an unhorsed knight.

Combat example

Let's take a look at an example of a joust that might be part of an actual adventure, using all of the ideas previously discussed.

The elven warrior-maid Allycia is traveling with her retainers and fellow party members across the countryside on a quest. She encounters a mounted warrior guarding a bridge. He proclaims that he is Scud the Invincible and challenges Allycia to joust for right of passage over the bridge. No quarter is to be given, and the winner takes the goods of the loser. Allycia accepts the challenge.

The two characters are described below.

Allycia

6th-level cavalier

Female high elf

Alignment: Neutral Good

Str: 17/87 Int: 13

Dex: 18/34 Wis: 12

Con: 16/43 Cha: 14

AC: -6 (-2) HP: 61

Possessions: full plate armor, *shield* +2, heavy horse lance, *longsword* +1

Hit probability: +1 (strength) + 1 (lance skill) +2 (charge bonus) = +4

Damage Adjustment: + 1 (strength) + 6 (lance skill) = +7

THAC0: 14 - (+4) = 10

Save vs. unhorsing adjustments:

DBU: +1 (strength) +3 (dexterity) +1 (horsemanship) +1 (female) +2 (magic shield) = +8

Save vs. unhorsing: 17 - (+8) = 9

APU: -1 (strength)

Scud the Invincible

8th-level fighter

Human male

Alignment: Neutral

Str: 18/59 Int: 8

Dex: 13 Wis: 10

Con: 17 Cha: 7

AC: 0 (1) HP: 66

Possessions: *plate mail* +1, *shield* +1, heavy horse lance, *battle axe* +2

Hit probability: +2 (strength) +2 (charge bonus) = +4

Damage Adjustment: + 3 (strength)

THAC0: 13 - (+4) = 9

Save vs. unhorsing adjustments:

DBU: + 2 (strength) +0 (dexterity) +0 (horsemanship) + 2 (magic armor and shield) = +4

Save vs. unhorsing: 16 - (+4) = 12
APU: - 2 (strength)

Allycia is a cavalier, so she gains advantages that Scud does not. She attacks at one level higher when on horseback. She gains a cavalier's lance skill to her hit probability, as well as her normal +2 charge bonus. Her modified chance to hit AC 0 is 10 or better. Her lance skill also benefits her damage potential.

When Allycia charges, she gains no dexterity bonus to her armor class. She is thus AC -2 when she jousts.

Allycia gains defensive bonuses to her saving throw vs. unhorsing (her DBU) for her strength, dexterity, horsemanship skill at 6th level, female sex, and her *shield* +2. Using the horsemanship proficiency progression, she needs to roll a 17 to avoid being unhorsed. With her impressive DBU of +8, she normally needs to roll a 9 or better to save vs. unhorsing. Her strength of 17/87 means that she imposes an APU penalty of -1 to Scud's save vs. unhorsing roll.

Scud gains no lance skill or horsemanship bonuses, since he is just a normal fighter. His lack of dexterity bonus makes him one armor class worse when he charges.

Although Scud gains strength and charge bonuses for his chance to hit Allycia, he lacks any special skill with the lance. Thus, he needs to roll a 9 or better to hit AC 0, using the 5% progression suggested by the special note on the bottom of page 74 of the DMG.

Scud gains defensive bonuses to his save vs. unhorsing (his DBU) for just his strength, magic armor, and magic shield. As he is 8th level, he needs to roll a 12 or better to avoid being unhorsed. His 18/59 strength gives him an APU of -2, which he applies to Allycia's save.

Allycia has a THAC0 of 10, so she hits Scud's AC 1 on a 9. Scud hits Allycia's AC -2 on an 11 or better.

Allycia normally needs to roll a 9 or better to save vs. unhorsing. Since Scud imposes an APU penalty to Allycia's save, she now saves on a 9 - (-2) = 11 or better. Scud normally saves vs. unhorsing on a roll of 12. Allycia imposes her APU of -1 to Scud's save, so Scud now saves vs. unhorsing on a roll of 12 - (-1) = 13 or better.

Both combatants are using heavy horse lances that inflict a base 2d4 + 1 damage. The attacks occur simultaneously, since their lances are of equal length. If both knights hit, then all damage and saving throws occur simultaneously as well.

Allycia rolls a 12 for her attack die result and hits Scud. At the same time, Scud hits Allycia with a roll of 16.

Since the lance charge inflicts double damage, Allycia's damage roll of 5 results in $(2 \times 5) + 7 = 17$ hp damage to Scud. Scud now has $66 - 17 = 49$ hit points. Scud rolls an 8 for his lance damage and does $(2 \times 8) + 3 = 19$ damage. Allycia's full plate armor absorbs 4 points of this damage, since the double damage of the lance charge is considered to be a 2 hit dice attack. Allycia only suffers 15 hp damage; she now has $61 - 15 = 46$ hit points.

Allycia must roll her saving throw to avoid being unhorsed. She rolls a 14 and makes her save. Scud rolls a 12 and is overthrown by Allycia's charge. He rolls 1d4 of falling damage and takes an additional 2 hp damage when he crashes to the ground. Scud now has 44 hit points.

Both knights must see if their lances have shattered. Allycia must roll a 13 or better for her lance to avoid shivering. She rolls a 7, so her lance has shattered. Scud must roll a 15 or better, since Allycia remained firm in the saddle. Scud's lance holds with a roll of 18. But Scud's lance is not nearly so useful when he is flat on his back.

Allycia rides up to Scud carefully so Scud cannot set his lance — now a pike — against her charge. She asks Scud to yield, but Scud grabs his battle axe and attacks. Allycia remains on horseback so she can still attack at one level higher. Scud fights fiercely, but he is no match for Allycia's superior armor and dexterity. Scud surrenders before he is slain. Allycia claims Scud's armor, weapons, and horse, as is her right of conquest.

The tournament

The tournament is undoubtedly one of the great highlights of a knight's life. Amidst great feasting and festivities, a cavalier has the chance to prove his or her knightly skill, to gain renown among both peers and populace, and to make a decent wage. The tournament provides excitement, entertainment, and ransom money or prizes for a successful knight.

In the tournament joust, very strict rules and customs are maintained to insure fair play and to reduce the chance of serious injury. The hosts and judges use every means possible to prevent cheating, regulate safety, and uphold the chivalric code of courtesy. Herald's keep track of those knights who enter and insure that only recognized and respected knights compete. Clerics and magic-users use detection and divination spells to prevent cheating or other foul deeds.

Very rigid rules of conduct are enforced in tournament jousting. Foul blows or cheating are penalized. Magical devices (including weapons, armor, and shields), unusual mounts, or other means used to

gain an unfair advantage are prohibited. Only a war horse may be ridden in the joust, and barding may be required to protect the mount. Blunt lances may be mandatory in a civilized tourney to reduce injury.

A tournament joust is restricted to the lance charge only. Foot combat after a knight is unhorsed is forbidden, as it is considered discourteous and unsportsmanlike (as well as time consuming). A wooden barrier, called a "toyle" or "tilt," 4' to 5' high, is placed along the length of the jousting field to separate the knights from each other. The tilting rail also helps to prevent the horses from colliding together or being accidentally speared.³

Entrance requirements

In many tournaments, only members of recognized orders of knighthood or members of the nobility are allowed to enter. Proof of knighthood or noble lineage is demanded by the officiating heralds. Little known cavaliers are allowed to enter only under unusual circumstances (such as the cavalier helping to save the kingdom).

If a liberal tournament allows all comers to enter, an entrance fee is likely to be required. The fee helps pay for the costs of holding the tourney, as well as for any prizes. The fee cannot be returned to the knight, especially not if the knight is disqualified for violating the rules. The fee is based on the status (i.e., level) of the knight.⁴ The fee should be at least 100 gp multiplied by the level of the knight.

To insure that knights of vastly different skill level do not face each other in the joust, every cavalier who competes in the joust is assigned to one of the four classes of Table 2.

Table 2
Cavalier Classes in Tournaments

Class	Experience Level
Esquire	1-4
Knight Bachelor	5-8
Cavalier	9-12
Cavalier Commander	13 and up

The first day or two of the tournament is devoted to practice, or perhaps to preliminary heats to assess the skill of unknown knights.⁵ Well-known knights are immediately assigned to the proper class without need for practice, as the judges already know the skill level of renowned knights. No knight of renown would dare compete in the heats against unknown knights, for fear of disgracing himself by jousting a suspected or possible inferior. A knight may choose to practice jousting against a known equal or friend.

The remaining days of the tourney are devoted to the jousts and other matches

and events. The nights are spent in feasting, dancing, and recovery from injuries. The first jousting matches of the day are fought by some of the finer knights present, to get the tourney off to a good start. Lesser knights then get their chance to joust. These knights try to prove their skill to their lords, sponsors, and superiors. The very finest knights joust last, to give the day's events a fitting climax.

The knights may be allowed to run a set number of matches in any given day, or joust a set number of matches throughout the duration of the tourney. For example, each knight may be allowed to joust three opponents a day for five days. The possible number of matches that a knight can fight is determined by the severity of the injuries sustained and the availability of healing. Again, blunt or fragile lances may be used, and the vanquishing rules (*Unearthed Arcana*, page 109) may be employed to reduce injuries.

The knight in each class who has accumulated the most victories over the days' matches is declared the champion of the class. Ties require a tiebreaker match, which is very exciting in itself. Penalties in the form of losses may be imposed for committing foul acts or unchivalrous deeds. Excessive violation of the rules may warrant immediate disqualification from the tourney. Great shame and dishonor follow any knight who has disgraced himself in the tournament.

Some typical rules violations that may warrant a penalty or disqualification are:⁶

1. Striking a foe from behind.
2. Spearing a horse.
3. Continuing the fight after a foe has been unhorsed or after the judges have declared the fight to be ended.
4. Striking a part of the body that the judges of a civilized tourney have forbidden (such as the helm).
5. Striking the toyle three times.

The challenge

Each knight should be allowed to choose whom he or she wishes to joust. A challenge can be issued by touching the lance to the shield of the contender a knight wants to joust. If the tournament allows a knight to choose between sharp or blunt lances to be used in the match, the knight can indicate his or her choice by touching one of two shields displayed by the challenged knight. Touching one shield indicates that sharp lances are to be used, usually in a joust between foes. Touching the other shield means that blunted "weapons of courtesy" are to be used.⁷

Alternately, a single shield can be touched in the challenge. Touching the shield with the point of the lance indicates a joust with sharp lances, while touching

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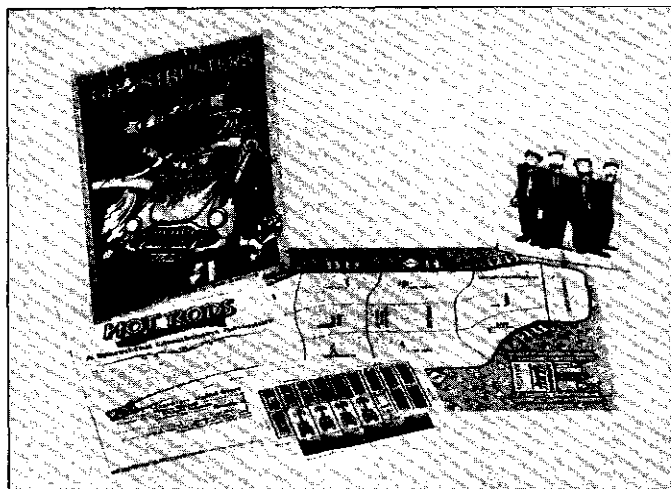
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with the butt of the lance is a challenge to joust with blunt lances.⁸

The match

When two knights joust, each knight is allowed three lances. The first knight to unhorse the opponent or to shiver all three of his or her lances against the foe is the winner of the match. If both knights are unhorsed simultaneously, then both knights suffer a loss in the tourney. If both shiver all three lances, then the knights must continue with a fourth or fifth lance, until a victor is found.

Instead of having each lance that hits make a save vs. shivering, it is easier to declare that any lance that scores a hit is shivered automatically in the tourney. Thus, any successful hit is counted as a broken lance.

The melee

On the day after the jousting matches, the melee is held. The melee is a large-scale contest involving all the knights present, but strictly supervised by the judges. The melee may be restricted to foot combat only, to further mark its difference from the mounted jousts. Unless

the melee begins with a mounted lance charge, the lance is forbidden in the melee.

In the melee, two teams of equal strength battle each other in order to capture the best and most famous knights of the opposing side. The better knights of each side seek each other out, to the exclusion of all others, leaving the lesser knights to contend among themselves. Vanquishing combat is the only form of combat allowed in a civilized melee. The judges monitor the melee for magic or cheating as scrupulously as they monitor the jousts.

Any knight vanquished in the melee is considered captured. The captured knight is then released to retire from the field for the day. If ransom is to be arranged with a captured knight, then the knight is expected to return to meet with his captor after the match. The knights who have captured the best and most renowned knights of the opposing side are declared the champions of the melee. Lesser knights are expected to aid and support the greater knights of their side. Lesser knights help to capture opposing knights and to protect their own best knights from

capture. Although the better knights have the greatest chance for glory and recognition, lesser knights who prove themselves in the melee may receive special acknowledgement and minor prizes from the judges.

At the outer edge of the field is an enclosure (sometimes called the "list") to which knights may retreat to rest, and where no fighting is allowed. Knights who are injured, tired, or have damaged armor may retire to the list to recover without fear of being attacked.⁹ Attacking a knight who has retired to the list is forbidden.

A knight on the melee field who is in trouble or seriously injured may be protected by the intervention of the *Chevalier d' Honneur*. This especially honored cavalier is privileged to wield the lance bearing the *couvre-chef* (kerchief) de mercy. When the chevalier of honor touches any knight on the field with his lance of mercy, that knight is protected from all further attacks.¹⁰ Any combatant foolish enough to attack a knight who has been so touched is immediately disqualified from further competition.

In the foot combat of the melee, combatants other than cavaliers can enter with a fair chance of success. Fighters and rangers of noble rank can enter the melee. Clerics might be allowed to enter, provided that their temple is recognized and approved by the tourney judges. A temple closely tied to lawful good or chivalric ideals has the best chance of being allowed into the melee. The tourney judges must take care that clerics from different temples are not divided into teams based on opposing religious views or alignment. Otherwise, the melee may break out into a religious war.

Prizes and ransom

Prizes awarded to the victorious vary with the quality of the tournament. Poorer tournaments may not be able to offer lavish prizes, and may instead allow a winning knight to claim the goods of the loser. A knight who has beaten a foe in the joust or captured an opponent in the melee may claim the arms, armor, and mount of the loser. The loser can ransom back his goods for a fee equal to the value of the goods claimed by the winner.

Better tournaments bestow valuable prizes to the champion of each class and the most valiant knights of the melee. Such prizes may include finely crafted weapons or armor, superlative horses, gold, or perhaps a very unusual gift.¹¹ The prizes awarded are commensurate with the level of the winner, of course. Newcomers who have proven themselves especially worthy and valiant may receive certain praise from the judges and a gift of acknowledgement (for being rookie of the year).



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The champion of the tourney is also allowed to choose a "queen of love and beauty." The champion knight of the highest jousting class or the champion of each class may choose the queen or queens of beauty of the tourney. A female champion may elect a male paramour for this honor, of course, electing a king of the tourney. The queen or king so chosen receives much honor and praise from the judges and spectators, as well as some gifts of acknowledgement — typically a crown and a few minor prizes.

Conclusion

With these suggestions and a bit of research by the DM, a grand jousting tournament can be run. The important thing for the DM to remember is that each DM should experiment freely with the ideas presented. A period of trial-and-error play-testing and tinkering may be needed to find a system that is most comfortable and balanced for each campaign.

The DM and players should seek out various books on medieval history and tales of knighthood to help flesh-out and add color to the tourney. The tourney contains a great many events popular in medieval times, including archery and wrestling contests, and often a medieval merchants' fair. A well-run tournament should include competitions and intrigues that provide adventure for all party members, not just cavaliers and paladins. The most highly recommended reference works include any by R.E. Oakeshott, Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*, and Nicholas Slope's *The Book of Medieval Wargames*, which contains tournament games.

Notes

1. Painter, *French Chivalry*, pp. 50-51.
2. Oakeshott, *A Knight and His Horse*, p. 68. Many noble ladies of the time were competent jousters, particularly Joan of Arc.
3. Oakeshott, *A Knight and His Horse*, p. 68, and Stone, *Glossary of Arms and Armor*, pp. 615, 626.
4. Keen, *Chivalry*, p. 86. An entrance fee was often required in English tournaments, after Richard I licensed tournaments and imposed fees that were based on the rank of the nobleman or knight. Barons and greater noblemen paid the most, while landless knights paid a small fee.
5. Oakeshott, *A Knight and His Horse*, p. 61. A French chanson written by Jaques de Bretac described heats for assessing the skill of jousters, taking place on the second day of a tournament held at Chauvency in 1285.
6. Stone, *Glossary of Arms and Armor*, p. 626. A prize could be lost for committing

some of the offenses mentioned in this article.

7. Painter, *French Chivalry*, p. 52.
8. Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 100.
9. Oakeshott, *A Knight and His Horse*, p. 60.
10. *Ibid*, p. 71.
11. *Ibid*, pp. 62, 68. At the tournament of Runnymede in A.D. 1215, following the signing of the Magna Carta, a local baron-ess donated a bear as a prize.

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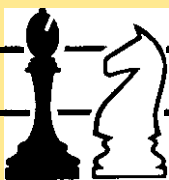
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A Day at the Faire

Life at a typical fantasy tournament

by Eileen Lucas

Now that you know how to run a tournament joust from the preceding article, the setting for a joust is needed. This article is intended to help a game referee create a tournament scenario for a fantasy campaign. It is only one example of how such a setting may be constructed.

Setting the scene

The characters arrive at a wealthy manor where a tournament is being held. They have been attracted there by heralds, hand-written posters, and word-of-mouth, all proclaiming the three-day event to be a challenge for the brave and gallant of Manormoor to prove themselves on the field of honor. Nobles and peasants, knights in armor, and ladies fair have gathered for the great event. The manor grounds are full of people; there are tents set up outside the walls, and even the normally quiet nearby town is bustling with activity.

As the characters approach the scene, they sense the festive mood which permeates the boisterous crowd. Besides the contestants and the spectators, peddlers and merchants with all manner of goods to sell have hastily set up shop in gaily-decorated wooden booths, simple tents, and hand-carts. There are finely-crafted weapons, expensive silks and wools, sparkling jewels, baskets of fruit and cheese, and refreshing mugs of wine and ale to tempt the passers-by. Jugglers have established themselves in various corners of the grounds, and minstrels roam the crowds, hoping to garner a few coins in exchange for their entertainment. A small stage has been erected by a man with a set of performing bears, and a gypsy has set up a tent nearby from which she sells the secrets of the future that only she can see.

Although the joust is the main event, other activities and contests have already

begun. A small pit has been cleared for wrestling; two young men grapple there. Another fellow is setting up a booth with a sign which reads, "Dagger toss -2 tries for a copper." Small sacks, some containing grain and some containing coins, seem to be both the targets and the prizes. At the end of the row of booths is the archery range, with targets set up at various distances.

Beyond this are the tournament grounds themselves, where the joust takes place. A tilting rail runs the length of the list, serving to separate the jousting opponents from each other. The wooden gallery which has been set up along one side of the list is already crowded with the noble folk who have come to watch the spectacle. The bright colors of their costumes and the many banners and flags bearing family coats-of-arms contribute to the festive atmosphere of the panorama. On the opposite side of the tournament grounds, across from where nobility sits, the commoners have also gathered to watch the sport. Their accommodations may be less grand, but their excitement is every bit equal to that of the gentry. Many shouts and cheers go up for their favorites from time to time.

Some distance past the tournament grounds is the manor house itself, where the feasting and revelry take place later in the evening. Parts of the manor are open to visitors — but all valuables have been hidden! The following is a description of the manor house, to be read to the characters at the appropriate time. Of course, the manor house's description may be changed to suit a particular setting.

As the characters step through the heavy front door, they find themselves in a dark foyer with the family coat-of-arms hung on the wall to the left. A wide stairway leading up to the sleeping quarters of the noble family is in

front of you. The hallway to the left leads to the guards' quarters (where a stairway leads down to the dungeon) and to the servants quarters. To the right are the lord's and lady's receiving room, the kitchen, and storerooms.

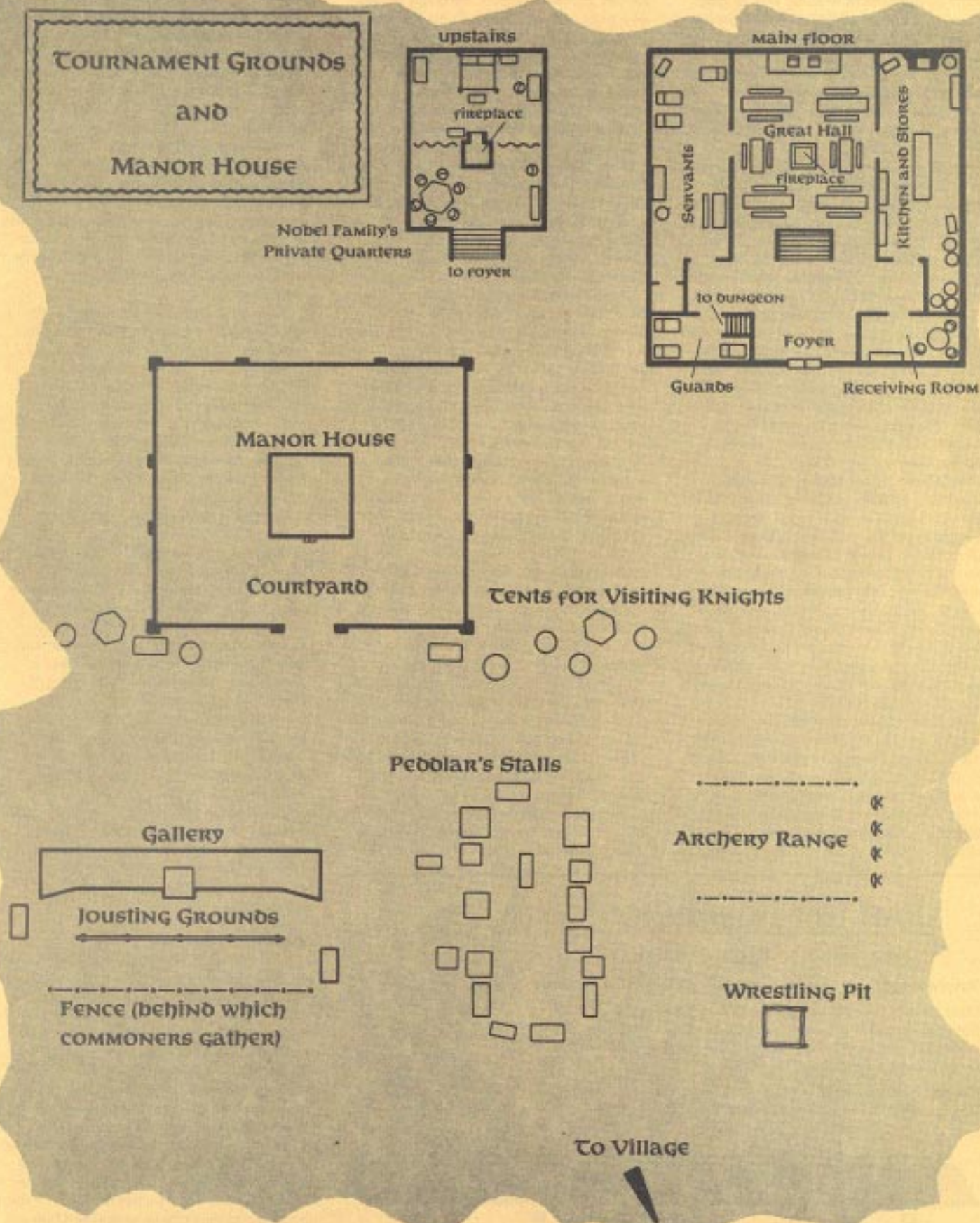
On either side of the stairs are open doorways to the great hall. A large fireplace with an open hearth dominates the center of the room, with large slab tables and benches placed around it. At the far end of the room, the lord's table sits on a raised dais. After the day's activities have been completed, the noble guests gather in this room for the evening's feast.

During the day, most of the residents of the manor will be at the tournament. However, at least two guards are always stationed in the guards' quarters, periodically roaming the manor to see that all is in order (unless someone has been imprisoned in the dungeon, in which case they do not leave their post).

The tournament starts

Just as the characters ride up to the lists, there is a fanfare of trumpets, and a herald begins to shout some of the rules for the contest. He informs the crowd that this is a gentlemen's tournament; only blunted weapons will be allowed. The entrance fee is 50 gp. The first of the three days set aside for the tournament is for practicing and assigning classes (see scenario 1), the second for jousting, and the third for melee (unless the DM only wants to run a one-day tournament, in which case the morning could be used for jousting and the afternoon for melee).

Each participant earns points. The one with the most points at the end of the tournament wins 2,000 gp and a magnificent heavy war horse complete with riding gear and decorative trappings. Lesser prizes are awarded to others who have



honored themselves in some way during the contests. (Any additional rules clarifications the DM wishes to make should also be cited here.)

Cast of non-player characters

A typical assortment of NPCs for use in a tournament setting follow. Again, these are only examples.

Sir Rufus Forthright (Earl of Manormoor and host of the tournament): AC 7 (*ring of protection* + 3); MV 12"; Human F7; hp 47; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 13, I 11, W 14, D 10, C 12, Ch 14; AL LG. The Earl of Manormoor is an elderly gentleman, a retired adventurer who loves to listen to stories of battles and brave deeds; he will tell his own stories to any who listen. He has a strict sense of fair play and will not tolerate thievery or wanton disregard for the safety of others during the tournament (a certain amount of brawling and petty theft is to be expected, however). Transgressors are sent to the dungeons, but will be released after the tournament (see scenario 2).

Elizabeth Forthright (Sir Rufus' daughter and only child): AC 10; MV 12"; zero-level human; hp 3; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 8, I 12, W 10, D 11, C 12, Ch 8; AL CG. Miss Forthright is not very beautiful, but as the Earl's heir, has been much courted and spoiled. She is in love with Sir Hugh, and expects him to win the tournament and name her Queen of Love and Beauty. If this does not occur, she will be, *very* disappointed. She is not above creating trouble for those she dislikes or who thwart her plans.

Sir Hugh Pritchard (the local champion): AC 2; MV 6"; Human Cav6; hp 58; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 17, I 11, W 10, D 15, C 16, Ch 11; AL LN. Sir Hugh is an arrogant and self-serving knight, but a very skilled fighter. Although he will not dishonor himself by actually cheating, he will bend the rules in his favor if he thinks

he can get away with it. Sir Hugh served as a page and as a squire in Sir Rufus's service, and has become like a member of the family. He expects to marry Elizabeth and become lord of Manormoor. Sir Hugh wants to win this tournament very badly to impress the Earl and his daughter.

Sir Danalane of the Oaks (a foreign challenger): AC -4 (full plate armor and shield); MV 6"; Half-elf Cav6; hp 49; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 16, I 15, W 14, D 18, C 15, Ch 18; AL LG. A young and handsome knight, Sir Danalane has just arrived at the manor, hoping to make a name for himself before setting out on a crusade. He challenges Sir Hugh in the tournament.

Mother Darkness (the fortuneteller): AC 3 (*bracers of defense*, AC 4); MV 9" (due to arthritis); Human MU4/T1; hp 16; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 7, I 16, W 16, D 15, C 15, Ch 13; AL CN. Mother Darkness is a middle-aged gypsy woman who uses both tarot cards and a (non-magical) crystal ball to predict a customer's future (see DRAGON® issue #59 for a gypsy fortunetelling chart). She has a dagger hidden in the wide sash she wears around her waist. Mother Darkness knows the following spells: *unseen servant*, *ESP*, *object reading*, and *read the cards*, which she uses to perform her fortunetelling act. She charges 1 gp to read the cards or look into the crystal ball.

Javya Daystar (strolling minstrel): AC 5 (*cloak of protection* +2); MV 22"; Human F5/T6/B5; hp 47; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 15, I 13, W 15, D 17, C 12, Ch 17; AL CN. Javya is the son of Mother Darkness, the fortuneteller. He strolls through the crowds and brings back information to her which she is often able to use in making convincing predictions. He carries a sling with six regular and six magical *bullets* +1. Javya plays a magic violin which, when played, adds +15% to his *charm* percentage, and allows him to use *obscurement*, *snare*, and *animal sum-*

moning once per day. He is also able to communicate with animals, and may attempt to gain information about the party from their horses, if appropriate.

Flip (the juggler): AC 5 (leather armor); MV 9"; Halfling T3; hp 15; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 11, I 9, W 12, D 17, C 15, Ch 16; AL CN. This halfling roams the crowd, keeping an eye out for interesting things he'd like to "have a closer look at." If a fight breaks out in the crowd, he will probably be nearby, as that is a perfect opportunity for him to ply his trade. If the party becomes involved with other members of the crowd, there is a good chance (60%) that Flip tries to acquire some belongings.

Azos Greathand (a peddler): AC 10; MV 6"; Dwarf F4; hp 34; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 16, I 11, W 15, D 14, C 17, Ch 10; AL LG. Azos has a wooden booth in the market-area of the fair, from which he sells fine jewels taken from dwarven mines in the nearby mountains. He knows his trade very well and drives a hard bargain. Azos may be interested in buying jewels from the characters if they have any of high quality to sell.

Tsogga Karsh (owner of the dagger-toss booth): AC 7 (leather armor, *ring of protection* +1); MV 12"; Half-orc F4; hp 31; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 15, I 14, W 12, D 14, C 16, Ch 7; AL N. A sly character, Tsogga does his best to entice the unwary to play his game. It is made to look much easier than it is, however, and only those skilled with a dagger have a good chance of actually hitting a bag of coins (and only some of the bags have coins in them; many are only filled with grain.) If strong complaints are lodged, Tsogga will not hesitate to challenge disgruntled customers to a fight; he is an experienced brawler.

The Lord's Guards (men-at-arms): AC 4 (chain mail and shield); MV 9"; hp 6 each; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; AL LG—LN. The guards are your basic guards: strict, moral, and generally humorless.

Possible scenarios

1. The most likely scenario is that one of the PCs decides to participate in the joust. If there's a knight in the party, he may be challenged by an NPC knight to defend the beauty and honor of his lady. Other fighters may feel inclined to participate to win the prize, or simply to test themselves or show off their skills to the crowd. In order to be allowed to enter the tournament, a character must state his name and his family background, noble status, or daring exploits which would entitle him to compete with the assembled knights. Tournament officials decide whether to allow the stranger to participate, and assign him to

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one of the four classes listed in Table 2 of the preceding article.

2. During the course of events, the party may be robbed of some valuable property, which they subsequently try to get back. Alternatively, a thief in the party may get caught lifting some goods and be brought before the authorities, headed by Sir Rufus. If Sir Rufus becomes involved, he has the offender placed in the dungeon for the duration of the tournament. If the party wishes to rescue the prisoner, it must get past the two guards on duty in the guard room of the manor, as that is the only entrance to the dungeon. (If the party is in need of the services of a thief, it should be able to hire one here.)

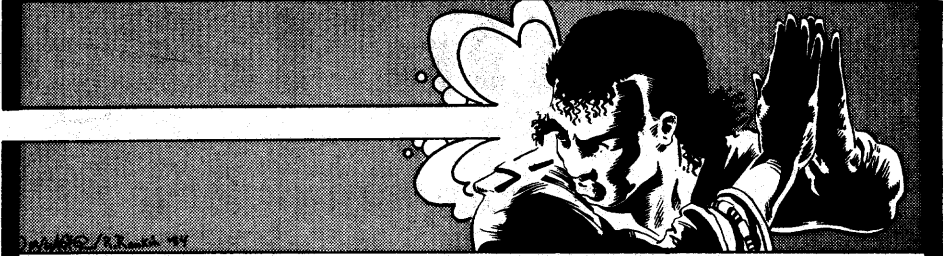
3. A member of the party is selected Queen of Love and Beauty; if a PC is the winner of the tournament, he is allowed to choose the Queen. This selection takes place on the last day of the tournament and is announced during the final banquet. The Queen is awarded a jewel-studded crown worth 1,000 gp and a magic scepter. The Queen then presents awards to those who have performed best in the tournament.

4. All kinds of encounters might occur in the market area of the fair. For instance, a visit to the fortune-teller can be used to give the characters information relating to other events in the campaign.

5. The PCs may be hired by the lord of the manor to perform some deed for him, either during the tournament or after. If any of them have performed well in the tournament, they may be hired as soldiers in the lord's army or sent on a special mission for the lord.

6. During the feasting and revelry taking place that evening (following the joust), one of the characters (especially if there is one who has a weakness for spirits) drinks too much and gets out of hand, perhaps getting fresh with the lady of a knight or starting a fight with someone. The great hall is crowded with guests. Despite the fine weather outside, a fire roars in the fireplace, both to remove the damp chill from the room and to serve as a hearth for some of the cooking. The aroma of many foods rests heavily in the air, mingling with the smells of exotic spices, heavy perfumes, and sweating bodies. Servants appear periodically, laden with trays of pork and partridge, venison and fish. As squires carve the meat and pages pour the wine, the minstrels compete with the sound of shouting voices which recall the best and the worst of the day's contests. Everyone in the room is either eating, drinking, shouting, singing, dancing, or performing any combination of the above. Fights are certainly in poor taste here, and combatants could spend a day or two in the dungeon "cooling off." Ω

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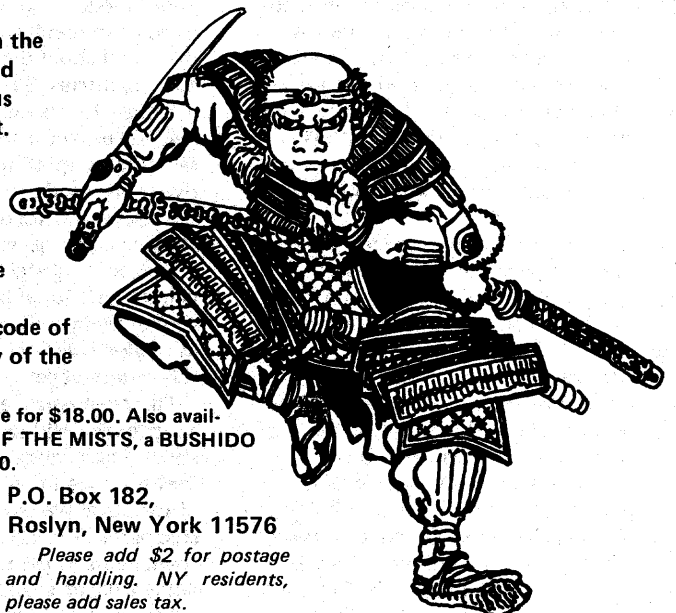
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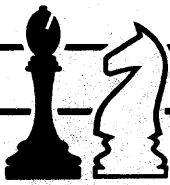
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On Target

Archery competitions for AD&D® gaming

by **Leonard Carpenter**

Much has been said or written about the many fighter classes of the AD&D® game system, especially the armor-plated sword-swingers who so often dominates play. Certainly, more attention should be paid to one other great romantic warrior of history and legend: the archer. The tales of Robin Hood and William Tell are as deserving of notice as those of any chivalrous knight or brawling barbarian.

The greatest event in the life of an archer is the majestic archery tournament. Presented herein is a system for handling an archery contest, using targets both medieval and modern.

In the medieval tournament, archery contests were nearly as popular as the jousting matches. Many woodsmen, hunters, soldiers, and country yeomen would compete with the longbow to gain fame and prizes. Because the archery contest was not restricted to the nobility, many adventurers and even commoners would be permitted to compete.

Two main events are conducted in archery contests: short- to medium-range target shooting and the long-range "clout" shoot. Although clout shooting was very popular in the Middle Ages, target archery became the standard competition in modern times. And, while target archery is more of a modern pursuit than a medieval one (bow strength and massed fire were more important in medieval military archery than pinpoint accuracy,) a DM may still wish to include target shooting in a tourney to capture the "Robin Hood" feel of an archery match.

The two most important targets used in target shooting are the very popular round target and its obscure cousin, the "wand" target. Both targets are described below.

The standard round archery target is 4' in diameter with its center pinhole set 4' above the ground. The target is tilted slightly toward the sky and divided into five concentric circles, including the gold center "bull's-eye." The circles are colored (in order outward) gold, red, blue, black, and white. Some targets used in past centuries had circles colored gold, scarlet, the inner white,

black, and the outer white. The gold bull's-eye is a standard 9.6" in diameter, while the outer circles have diameters of 19.2" for the red, 28.8" for the blue, 38.4" for the black, and 48" for the white. Other targets may be divided into 10 concentric circles, with a center bull's-eye 4.8" in diameter.

Points are scored for striking each of the target circles. From the outer white to the inner gold, the point values are 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9 points for a bull's-eye. A lo-circle target is scored with point values from 1 to 10, with 10 points going to a hit in the 4.8"-diameter bull's-eye.

The round target is usually shot at from short to medium range, typically a distance of 50 to 100 yards. As an example, the famous "York Round" consists of 72 arrows shot at 100 yards, 48 arrows at 80 yards, and 24 arrows at 60 yards.

The round target is usually made of canvas stuffed with straw or hay, with a stiff backing to prevent arrows from passing through it. Other targets may be made from a simple board of soft wood with the circles drawn on it. Because of the target's soft material and the need to only strike but not deeply penetrate the target, archery targets have AC 10.

Another common form of target shooting is the wand shoot. Although it is little known today, the wand shoot was very popular in medieval times. References to the wand shoot date back to the 12th and 13th centuries. Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (Chapter 13) recounts how Robin Hood gained respect from all members of the tourney by splitting a willow wand at five-score yards.

In the wand shoot, archers try to hit a slender wand of wood 6' tall by 2" wide, which is set upright in the ground. The wand is AC 10, of course. The wand is shot at from a distance of 60 to 100 yards in modern archery, just as in the shoot at the round target.

The most common form of archery sport in the Middle Ages was the clout shoot. Long-range clout shooting was the best practice for the massed archery fire of medieval warfare. Archers would sharpen their skills by shooting at the small clout target from a range of 180 to 200 yards, or even 240 yards with a powerful war-bow. Clout shooting declined in

popularity as bows became less important as weapons of war. With the burgeoning of modern-era archery societies, the battle skill of the clout shoot was supplanted by the leisure-time art of target shooting.

A variety of clout targets may be used in contests. The clout target may be a simple butt of wood or tree stump about 2' in size. The Woodmen of Arden of 19th-century Scotland used a black-centered white target 30" in diameter, set at a 60° angle. Another target used in England was an 18"-diameter, canvas-covered disc placed flat upon the ground, with a wooden peg in the center. A willow wand or pennant sometimes marked the center of the clout target.

Target size modifiers

Because of the various sizes of targets used in an archery match, it is important to establish a table of target-size modifiers to simulate the increasing difficulty involved in hitting progressively smaller targets. Such a table is given below. The idea behind this table is taken from Lenard Lakofka's "Missile Fire and the Archer Sub-class," DRAGON® issue #45.

A human-sized target is presented first to provide a proper comparison with the various archery targets. A human-sized target is defined as 6' tall by 2' wide, or one third as wide as it is tall. This target has a surface area of about 12 sq. ft., or roughly 1,700 sq. in. The approximate surface areas of all other targets may be compared to this standard, as expressed by a percentage of human size. A progression of target size modifiers may then be created to reflect the effect of target size in attempting an archery shot.

The "to hit" modifiers for different sizes of targets are given for point blank, short, medium, and long ranges. The range modifiers of -2 and -5 for medium and long ranges are built into the table, as seen in the "to hit" modifiers for the human-sized target. As smaller and smaller targets are considered, the target-size modifiers become increasingly difficult.

In addition to the tournament archery targets, a selection of other common objects is listed in order of decreasing size. The very smallest of targets are effectively invisible at long range. That is, targets with a "to hit" modifier greater than -28

are beyond the ability of any reasonable character. The dead-center pinhole of a round target is very hard to hit even at medium range. Splitting the tail-end of an arrow roughly $\frac{3}{8}$ " in diameter is the most demanding archery feat of all.

Most targets in the table are circular. Such targets are easy to deal with, since surface area alone guides the choice of a target-size modifier. Long, slender targets such as the willow wand pose a curious problem. Although the wand has a surface area roughly equal to that of a circle 1' in diameter, the wand should be the more difficult target, since an error in aim of but 1-2" will send the arrow skirting past the slender rod. As an archer has a smaller margin of error in shooting at a slender target compared to a round one, the *effective* surface area of the wand is smaller than its actual surface area.

Two sets of "to hit" modifiers are given for the wand. The first set is based on the target's actual surface area. The second set is based on the estimate that the wand's effective surface area is about one-fourth that of its actual size.

This same idea of effective vs. actual area could be applied to other slender targets of considerable length. A 1" cable would be as difficult to hit as a clout peg,

while a $\frac{1}{2}$ "-thick rope would be as hard to split as a coin.

Archery example

When an archer shoots at the round target of concentric circles, the easiest way to handle the event is to apply the appropriate target-size modifier for each target circle to the archer's minimum number needed to hit AC 10. Once the "to hit" roll is made, the roll is checked against the minimum needed to hit each target circle, starting with the most difficult target and working outward. Each target or target circle is checked in turn until the circle in which the arrow lands is finally determined. For example, if the arrow misses the pinhole, then check to see if it

hits the gold circle; if the arrow fails to land in the gold, then see if it landed in the red circle, and so on. Each circle is checked in turn, until either the circle in which the arrow lands is determined or the shot is found to completely miss the target.

For example, an 11th-level ranger with 17 dexterity is shooting at the round target from a distance of 100 yards. He gains a +2 "to hit" bonus for his dexterity. He must roll a 0 - (+2) = -2 to hit AC 10. When the size modifiers for all targets or target circles at medium range are applied to his minimum needed to hit AC 10, a table of minimums to hit each target or circle is generated (see Table 2).

The skilled Bowman will have no trouble in hitting the target, and can hit the gold

Table 2
11th-level Ranger Table (Example 1)

Target	Size modifier	Min. needed to hit
White circle	- 2	0
Black circle	- 3	1
Blue circle	- 4	2
Red circle	- 5	3
Cold circle	-10	8
Inner gold	-15	13
Pinhole	-26	24 (natural 20)
Arrow-tail	-28	26 (natural 20 + 1)

Table 1
Archery target table

Target	Dimensions	Surface area	% of human size	P B	"To hit" modifier			
					S	M	L	
Human-sized	6'h. x 2'w.	12 sq.' (1,700 sq.")	100%	0	0	- 2	- 5	
Round target:								
White circle	48" dia.	1,800 sq."	105%	0	0	- 2	- 5	
Black circle	38.4" dia.	1,150 sq."	65%	0	- 1	- 3	- 6	
Blue circle	28.8" dia.	650 sq."	40%	0	- 2	- 4	- 8	
Red circle	19.2" dia.	290 sq."	15%	- 1	- 3	- 5	-10	
Cold circle	9.6" dia.	70 sq."	4%	- 3	- 5	-10	-15	
Inner Cold	4.8" dia.	18 sq."	1%	- 4	- 8	-15	-20	
Robin	6" dia.	30 sq."	2%	- 4	- 7	-13	-18	
Apple	3" dia.	7 sq."	.4%	- 5	-10	-18	-24	
Clout Peg	2" dia.	3 sq."	.2%	- 6	-12	-21	-28	
Coin	1" dia.	.8 sq."	.05%	- 7	-14	-24		
Pinhole	$\frac{1}{2}$ " dia.	.2 sq."	.01%	- 8	-16	-26		
Arrow-tail	$\frac{1}{4}$ " dia.	.1 sq."	.005%	- 9	-18	-28		
Clout targets:								
	30" dia.	700 sq."	40%	0	- 2	- 4	- 8	
	24" dia.	450 sq."	25%	0	- 2	- 4	- 9	
	18" dia.	250 sq."	15%	- 1	- 3	- 5	-10	
	12" dia.	110 sq."	7%	- 2	- 4	- 7	-12	
Willow wand								
	6'h. x 2" w.	140 sq." ¹	8%	- 2	- 4	- 7	-12	
		30 sq." ²	2%	- 4	- 7	-13	- 8	

¹ Actual surface area.

² Effective surface area.

circle quite easily. The true test will be hitting the inner gold as many times as possible, and in trying to hit the pinhole. Since the number 20 is repeated six times in the “to hit” tables, the archer can still hit any target requiring a minimum “to hit” roll of 20 to 25, if he rolls a natural 20. The arrow-tail requires a minimum roll of 26, so he cannot split an arrow at medium range without the help of magic of at least +1 in power. The archer will have to wait until he reaches 12th level before he can split an arrow without using a magic bow or arrow.

The ranger shoots his first arrow, and rolls a 15. He misses the pinhole, but hits the inner gold. He rolls a 2 for his second shot, and curses himself for his poor aim. He misses both gold circles and the red circle to score a hit in the blue. He scores two easy bulls-eyes with rolls of 12 and 9, and finally hits the pinhole with a natural 20. He tries to repeat his dead-center shot with his sixth arrow, but rolls a 17 for a hit in the inner gold.

The ranger now tries his hand at the clout shoot. From a distance of 200 yards, he shoots at a clout target 18' in diameter with 6"-diameter inner circle with a 2"-diameter clout peg. His minimum rolls to hit the target are shown on Table 3.

The ranger should do well at hitting the clout consistently, but hitting the inner circle is a good challenge. He is still not skilled enough to split the peg without the aid of magic. On the average, the ranger should hit the clout with 13 shots out of 20, five of which should hit the inner circle.

Hero points in archery

To give archers the opportunity to influence the results of an archery match, the DM could permit archers to use their “hero points” to affect their “to hit” rolls (see “A Hero’s Reward,” by Leonard Carpenter in this issue). Archers may expend hero points to improve their chances with important shots. Some archers might choose to apply hero points a few at a time throughout the day to improve their shooting average. Others may save their points until faced with the dramatic moment of truth, then gamble all their points on one or two crucial shots. Trying to split an opponent’s arrow à la Robin Hood is the most obvious time for a major hero point expenditure.

Archery misses

Whenever an archer shoots at a given target and misses, it is sometimes important to know in which direction the arrow flies. The easiest method to find the path of a missed shot is to roll 1d12, and use the result as the “clockwise” direction in which the arrow flies or lands. For instance, if an arrow misses the target in the

clout shoot, a 3 o’clock result on 1d12 indicates the arrow lands beyond the clout. If William Tell, in trying to shoot the apple off his son’s head, had missed, he would have been in real trouble if he had rolled a 6 o’clock low shot.

Occasionally, the DM may need to know the exact distance by which an arrow misses the mark. This distance may be rolled randomly. The shot will miss the edge of the target by 4d6 inches at point-blank range, 1d6 feet at short range, 3d6 feet at medium, and 3d6 yards at long.

Archery combat

The target archery system described here is best restricted to sport competition only, and is definitely not recommended for general combat. Just because an archer can hit the bull’s-eye in a friendly tourney competition does not mean the archer can shoot out a dragon’s eye in the heat of battle. There is no provision in the rules for hitting a specific part of the anatomy in normal melee combat. Aiming at a small, seemingly vulnerable part of a creature’s body borders on the use of a critical-hits system and has no part in the AD&D game.

If the DM does allow a character to attempt a difficult shot during melee (such as shooting at a potion vial or an opponent’s weapon), then the DM must enforce proper restrictions on the attempt. Great concentration and a superb shooting form are required to hit a small target under any circumstances. When an archer tries to hit an object smaller than six inches in size, only one shot per round may be fired, regardless of bow specialization or experience level, because of the time that must be spent in aiming at the target. For the same reason, a normal initiative roll replaces the “nocked and ready” advantage at point-blank range (see *Unearthed Arcana*, page 18) when an archer takes aim at a small target.

An archer must remain very still to maintain proper shooting form in target archery, and so is a more vulnerable target when taking careful aim during melee. The stationary archer gains no armor class bonus for his dexterity, since he cannot bob and weave to avoid attack. Also, any attack that successfully hits the archer before he gets his shot off spoils the shot, just as a hit on a spell-caster ruins the spell.

The archery contest

The judges who oversee the archery contest enforce a strict code of conduct for the entrants. Any means of gaining an unfair advantage — magical or otherwise — is forbidden. No magic of any kind may be used by an archer, whether in the form of a spell or magic weapon. Trying to sneak a magic bow, arrows, or other forbidden items into the contest warrants immediate expulsion.

An entrance fee may be required of the competitors in the match. The fee helps pay for the cost of the prizes awarded and supports the continuing work of the archery society sponsoring the contest. The size of the fee should be proportional to the experience level of the archer, perhaps 20 gp per level of the entrant. Members in good standing of the society may be given a discount of 10% to 40%.

Country peasants and lesser yeomen pay nothing to enter the contest, so as not to discourage the common folk from aspiring to win a prize. A wise monarch will do everything possible to promote archery practice among the people. Good archers make for a strong army.

Entrants should be assigned to a suitable skill class so that archers may compete fairly against their peers. Novice archers should face other novices, not experts. Using the “5% principle” suggested on the bottom of page 74 of the *DMG*, the five archery skill classes are given here.

Table 4	
Archery Skill Classes	
Archery class	Experience level
Novice	0-2
Amateur	3-5
Expert	6-8
Master	9-12
Grand Master	13&up

The novice class includes low-level fighters and rangers as well as zero-level men-at-arms, country yeomen, and “weekend shooters.” The novice class of competition gives these lesser archers the chance to gain a touch of fame and a minor prize. But most important, such contests promote the vital battle-art of archery among the common folk.

Table 3
11th-level Ranger Table (Example 2)

Target	Size modifier	Min. needed to hit
Clout, 18" diameter	-10	8
Circle, 6" diameter	-18	16
Peg, 2" diameter	-28	26 (natural 20 + 1)

Archery scoring

The point-scoring system of the popular round target is very time consuming to simulate in the AD&D game system. Easier ways to determine victory are needed. A simple contest might permit each archer to shoot three or six arrows at the target. The archer who comes closest to the center pinhole is the winner. If one of the archers scores a hit in the pinhole, then the only way to top the shot is to split the dead-center arrow, a la Robin Hood.

In a grand archery tournament, each archer might shoot three or six arrows at a time through several rounds. After one or two dozen arrows in all have been shot, the major prize may go to the archer who has scored the most bull's-eyes. If the archers involved are very skilled, then prizes should instead be awarded for the most hits in a more difficult target, such as the 4.8" diameter inner gold or even the center pinhole. A special prize should go to any archer who splits an opponent's arrow.

In the wand shoot, the judges simply count the number of times each archer strikes the wand. Splitting an arrow in the wand shoot is rare, but skilled archers may attempt such a feat to impress the spectators and gain an extra prize.

In the clout shoot, lesser archers may be satisfied with just trying to hit the clout as many times as they can. Better archers will try to come as close as possible to the center of the clout, most especially to split the center clout peg.

Prizes awarded in the contest should be commensurate with the skill level of the archers. Cash prizes for first, second, and third place are awarded in each event, ranging in value from silver and electrum for novices and amateurs up to gold and gems for masters and grand masters. A bonus prize should be given for each arrow an archer splits.

If several different archery events are held during the tourney, then a grand prize should go to the archer judged the best overall in his or her skill class. A good performance in the clout shoot takes the grand prize over an equally worthy showing in target archery, since a skilled clout shooter is the more valuable archer in a medieval army. The grand prizes bestowed should be useful and distinctive, and should have a cash value as well. A bow of exotic wood, a beautifully crafted quiver, a jeweled shooting glove, or a set of arrows +1 fletched with rare bird feathers are prizes any champion archer would be proud to receive.

Each grand-prize winner also receives an ornate trophy shaped in the form of an arrow. The platinum arrow is bestowed to the best archer in the grand master class, the gold arrow in the master class, the

electrum in the expert class, the silver in the amateur class, and the bronze arrow to the best novice.

In every class from the amateur to the grand master, a special booby prize is awarded. The "wooden spoon" award is bestowed for the worst showing in each event. No wooden spoon is given in the novice class, however; encouragement should be given to novice archers, not embarrassment.

Although crossbows and other missile weapons are not specifically addressed in this article, many of the guidelines that pertain to the bow apply equally well to the crossbow, dart, or spear. Skill and accuracy with the throwing axe, dagger, or javelin can be tested by hurling the missile at a round target from a range of 20 to 60 yards. Crossbow shooters can compete in the same types of target archery or clout shooting contests enjoyed by longbow archers. Characters who favor many kinds of missile weapons should be given the chance to experience the thrill of competition.

With the guidelines presented here, the DM can run an archery contest tailored to the needs and flavor of his or her campaign world.

The DM should check out various books on archery, some of which are suggested below, to learn more about archery, both medieval and modern. Armed with this knowledge, the DM can provide the players with an adventure reminiscent of the tales of Robin Hood or the legendary feats of William Tell.

Suggested reading

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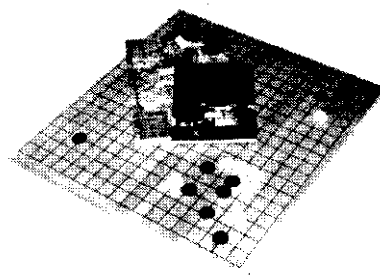
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"ARRRRGH!!!"

A painful topic for AD&D® game characters



by Christopher Wood

The Hole was quiet. Its heavy, semi-circular doors lay closed; almost horizontal on the low, flat knoll, pieces of its corroded lock scattered across the ground nearby.

One of the doors opened suddenly, pushed upwards from below. An armored figure crawled out painfully, blood dripping through the rent chain armor on its right leg. A dull roar followed from deeper within the Hole.

Aan quickly pushed the door shut and leaned heavily on it, forcing the latch back into place. He had been foolish to try to recapture the church's treasure alone, and now he would pay for his lack of wisdom. The lock had not slowed him at all when he had entered the Hole two days ago. He cursed the remaining useless splinters of metal around him and slipped his thick-bladed sword through the latch, then crawled to a tree and leaned against it, clutching his mutilated leg.

The roars had subsided to grunts, but now Aan could hear the beast directly beneath the doors. The doors shuddered, straining against the bloody sword stuck through the latch. Aan watched the sword bend and shatter. The doors flew open. The beast emerged.

Aan tried to stand, but the pain in his leg burned hotter, and he fell back against the tree. The beast approached slowly.

But that can't happen in AD&D games.

It seems strange that a medieval sword-and-sorcery role-playing system, understandably more than a bit involved in blood-and-guts violence and combat, would have no method of dealing with the pain and other effects of a character's physical wounds (it certainly cannot be *pleasant* to have one's leg clawed open); yet, other than the vague effects of the *symbol of pain* spell, AD&D gaming has no pain system and no way to simulate wounds. Even Loviatar, the Maiden of Pain, can cause 'only a memory of pain.

The following system, with advanced

and optional rules outlined afterwards, simulates wounds and the effects of pain.

Basic Rules

Basically, a wound of sufficient severity should cause pain (as well as actual mechanical damage to the working parts of the body) that affects a character's performance.

Threshold of pain

First, the DM must prepare a new statistic for each character: the threshold of

Table 1
Threshold of Pain for Dwarves and Elves

Character's constitution	Dwarf			Elf					
	Gray	Hill Mntn		Dark	Gray	High Vall	Wild	Wood	
6	—	—	—	7%	10%	10%	8%	12%	12%
7	—	—	—	8%	11%	11%	8%	12%	12%
8	—	—	—	9%	12%	12%	9%	13%	13%
9	—	—	—	10%	12%	12%	10%	14%	14%
10	—	—	—	11%	13%	13%	11%	15%	15%
11	—	—	—	12%	14%	14%	12%	15%	15%
12	17%	18%	18%	12%	15%	15%	12%	16%	16%
13	18%	18%	19%	13%	15%	15%	13%	16%	16%
14	18%	19%	19%	14%	16%	16%	14%	17%	17%
15	19%	19%	20%	15%	16%	16%	15%	17%	17%
16	19%	20%	20%	15%	17%	17%	15%	17%	18%
17	20%	20%	20%	16%	17%	17%	16%	18%	18%
18	20%	20%	20%	16%	17%	17%	16%	18%	19%
19+	25%	26%	26%	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 2
Threshold of Pain for Other Demi-humans

Character% constitution	Gnome Deep	Gnome Surface	Half-elf	Half-ling	Half-ogre	Half-orc	Human
3	—	—	—	—	—	—	5%
4	—	—	—	—	—	—	6%
5	—	—	—	—	—	—	7%
6	—	—	10%	—	—	—	9%
7	—	—	11%	—	—	—	10%
8	13%	13%	12%	—	—	—	11%
9	13%	13%	22%	—	—	—	11%
10	14%	13%	13%	15%	—	—	12%
11	15%	14%	14%	16%	—	—	13%
12	16%	14%	15%	17%	—	—	14%
13	16%	15%	15%	17%	—	19%	14%
14	17%	16%	16%	18%	21%	20%	15%
15	17%	17%	16%	18%	22%	20%	15%
16	18%	18%	17%	19%	23%	21%	16%
17	18%	19%	17%	19%	24%	21%	16%
18	—	—	17%	19%	25%	21%	16%
19+	—	—	—	25%	—	27%	22%

Fighters, cavaliers, and monks receive modifiers for the threshold of pain because of special training unique to their classes and must recalculate the threshold of pain each time they gain (or lose) levels of experience. Note that some monks can almost ignore pain altogether.

pain. This statistic, a percentage of the character's total hit points, provides a measure of how severe a wound a character can sustain without suffering adverse effects. If any one attack (or any other factor that causes similar loss of hit points) does damage exceeding the character's threshold of pain, the character suffers the effects of a painful wound. Race and constitution determine the character's threshold of pain. Use Tables 1, 2, and 3.

Effects of wounds

Each time a single attack against a character does damage exceeding the character's threshold of pain, the character receives a wound. (In the basic pain system, the location of the wound is unimportant; imagine the character's wounds to

be distributed evenly over his body.) Record each wound and the amount of damage on the character sheet.

According to the number of wounds that a character has sustained, certain penalties apply to the character's performance:

Table 4
Effects of Wounds (Basic Rules)

No. of wounds	Hit and damage	Armor class	Mvmnt. rate
1	-1 / -1	- 1	nil
2	-2 / -1	- 1	-1"
3	-2 / -2	- 2	-3"
4	-3 / -3	- 3	-5"
5 +	-4 / -4	- 5	- 8" /cripple

The indicated penalties apply as long as the character's wounds remain unhealed,

and change as the character's number of wounds changes. "Cripple" implies that the character has lost his ability to stand unaided due to the horrible wounds on his legs; until healed, such crippled characters must use crutches, lean on companions, or crawl.

Example: Cornered in his hall, a terrified hermit strikes the elven thief Kelthy (29 hp, threshold of pain 14% and 4 hp), causing 15 hp damage and creating a wound. Kelthy records "Wound 15" on her character sheet and suffers the penalties of hit and damage - 1/ - 1 and armor class - 1. Fleeing the hermit's hall in terror, she feels a flung dagger penetrate her lower back, causing another 8 hp damage and creating another wound; her character sheet now reads "Wounds 15 and 8." With two wounds, she now has the penalties of hit and damage -2/- 1, armor class - 1, and movement rate - 1".

Healing wounds

Wounds are temporary. Each time the character regains hit points by any means (including rest, spells or potions of healing, wishes, etc.), divide the amount of hit points regained equally among all the character's wounds and apply remaining points to the oldest wounds. When a wound has healed to a level below the character's threshold of pain, remove the wound from the character sheet.

Example: Safe outside the hermit's hall, Kelthy drinks a *potion of healing* and regains 6 hp. Three points each go to her two wounds, and she updates her character sheet to read "Wounds 12 and 5." She rests for three days, regaining 1 hp per day (see *DMG*, p. 82); her wounds drop to 10 and 4. After another day of rest, the knife wound in her back has healed to 3 hp (below her threshold of pain) and ceases to cause its detrimental effects. She suffers now only from the original wound, healing at 1 hp per day.

Advanced Rules

For a more realistic (and consequently more complicated) system for simulating wounds, use the following advanced rules for wound location, advanced effects of wounds, and overwhelming pain.

Wound location

In some cases, the physical location of a wound on a character's body is apparent

Table 3
Threshold of Pain Modifiers for Fighters, Cavaliers, and Monks

Character Class	Character's experience level	0	1-3	4-5	6-7	8	9	10+
Cavalier	—	—	+ 2%	+ 3%	+ 5%	+ 8%	+12%	+17%
Paladin	—	—	+ 3%	+ 5%	+ 7%	+10%	+13%	+16%
Fighter	+0%	—	+ 3%	+ 6%	+ 9%	+12%	+14%	+16%
Barbarian	—	—	+ 9%	+10%	+11%	+12%	+13%	+14%
Ranger	—	—	+ 1%	+ 3%	+ 6%	+10%	+15%	+20%
Monk	—	—	+10%	+20%	+30%	+40%	+50%	+60%

Example: Aan is a 5th-level paladin with a constitution of 15; he therefore has a threshold of pain of 20% (15% for constitution + 5% as a 5th-level paladin). He has 33 hit points, so any wound causing less than 7 hp ($20\% \times 33 \text{ hp} = 6.6 \text{ hp}$) of damage does not affect his performance. Any blow that causes 7 hp of damage or more inflicts a wound upon Aan — obviously, the beast in the Hole has done that much damage and more to the poor paladin's right leg.

Characters should record on their character sheets both the percentage for the threshold of pain and the amount of damage in hit points that cause a wound (for Aan, figures of 20% and 7 hp). Recalculate the amount of damage each time the character's maximum hit points changes.

Table 5
Wound Location Table

d100 roll	Location of wound
01-17	Head
18-40	Body
41-55	Right arm
56-70	Right leg
71-85	Left arm
86-00	Left leg

— a stab in the back, a bash on the head, a chomp on the leg. In other cases, roll on the wound location table to determine where the character has been hit.

Of course, a random wound location might not fit the situation of the battle. An unarmed kobold should not be able to administer a head wound to a 6'-tall fighter, and a thief crouching behind a low wall should rarely receive a leg wound. The DM must arbitrarily alter the location of the wound as the game demands.

Factors other than combat (fire, falls, poison, disease, etc.) can also cause damage as painful as wounds inflicted in battle; therefore, any wounds falling into these and similar categories create general wounds as opposed to localized damage.

Advanced effects of wounds

In the basic rules, wounds are considered to be spread evenly across the character's body; therefore, the effects of the wounds are generalized. In the advanced rules, wounds have precise locations and specific effects.

Effects of head wounds: If the character is wearing a helmet, he has a chance of reducing the damage of the wound by 25% for small helmets or 50% for great helms; and if the damage falls below the character's threshold of pain due to the protection of his helmet, he suffers no head wound. If the character has no helmet or his helmet fails to reduce the damage sufficiently, record a head wound for the character.

There is a chance that a head wound will knock a character unconscious; this chance is equal to the amount of damage sustained (after any applicable reduction for a helmet is determined) divided by the character's maximum hit points. Unconsciousness lasts for a number of rounds equal to the amount of damage of the wound that caused the unconsciousness. Some DMs might wish to impose blurred vision or ringing in the ears for multiple or severe head wounds.

Example: A palace guard in the gnome king's castle strikes Thammon (halfling, thief, constitution 10, 13 hp, threshold of pain 15% and 2 hp) in the head from behind, hoping to knock him out and capture him (and thereby receive a promotion). The guard does 3 hp of damage and delivers a head wound to Thammon, but not enough to put the halfling out of action (3/13 = 0.231 = 23% chance of unconsciousness, DM rolls a 55 on d100). The two small demi-humans roll for initiative and Thammon strikes first — a vicious blow of 7 hp to the guard's head. The guard's great helm successfully protects his tender gnome head, and the damage drops to 4 hp. The guard's threshold of pain is 15% and 5 hp, thus the blow fails even to create a wound. The guard strikes back in anger, doing another 8 hp of damage to Thammon's already-throbbing head (8/13 = 0.615 = 62% chance of unconsciousness, DM rolls a 30 on d100). Subse-

quently, the thief falls at the guard's feet. The victorious gnome has 8 rounds to bind his captive and summon help.

Effects of body wounds: Body wounds count only toward overwhelming pain (see below).

Effects of leg wounds: Due to the char-

acter's impaired ability to maneuver in melee, reaction/attacking and defensive adjustments (see *Players Handbook*, p. 11, Dexterity Table I) receive a -1 penalty per leg wound. Also, the character's movement rate for all movement afoot receives the following modifiers:

Table 6
Movement Rate Penalty for Leg Wounds

Wounds on right leg	0	1	2	3 +
0	nil	-1"	-3"	-5" /cripple
1	-1"	-3"	-5"	-7" /cripple
2	-3"	-5"	-7" /cripple	-9" /cripple
3 +	-5" /cripple	-7" /cripple	-9" /cripple	-12" /cripple

The basic rules for "crippled" characters apply equally in the advanced rules.

Effects of arm wounds: Characters should specify right-hand or left-hand favor; characters with a high dexterity have a possibility of being ambidextrous. Because of the wounded character's re-

duced ability to defend himself, each arm wound incurs a defensive adjustment penalty (see *Players Handbook*, p. 11, Dexterity Table I) of -1, as well as hit and damage penalties for the character's melee and missile fighting:

Table 7
Hit and Damage Penalties for Arm Wounds

Wounds on primary arm	0	1	2	3 +
Character wielding one-handed weapon with primary arm or ambidextrous character * wielding 1-handed weapon				
0	—	—		- 1
1	- 1	- 1	- 1	- 2
2	- 2	- 2	- 2	- 3
3 +	- 3	- 3	- 3	- 4/defense
Character wielding one-handed weapon with secondary arm				
0	—	- 2	- 3	- 4
1	—	- 2	- 3	- 4
2	- 1	- 2	- 3	- 4/defense
3 +	- 2	- 3	- 4/defense	- 5/defense
Character wielding a two-handed weapon				
0		- 1	- 2	- 3
1	- 1	- 2	- 3	- 4
2	- 2	- 3	- 4	- 6/defense
3 +	- 3	-	4 -6/defense	-8/defense
Character wielding two weapons **				
0	—	- 1	- 2	- 3
1	- 1	- 3	- 4	- 5
2	- 2	- 4	- 6	- 7/defense
3 +	- 3	- 5	- 7/defense	- 9/defense

* Consider weapon arm as primary arm.

** The indicated penalties apply in addition to the normal penalties for wielding two weapons (see *DMG*, p. 70).

The indicated penalties apply to both "to hit" and damage rolls in melee combat and to "to hit" rolls in missile combat. "Defense" implies that the character has been so badly wounded that he must roll less than or equal to his constitution score on 3d6 each round in order to attack that round (the roll is not necessary for missile combat).

Effect of general wounds: General wounds, like body wounds, count only toward overwhelming pain (see below).

Example: Kairin (gray elven magic-user,

30 hp, constitution 15, threshold of pain 15% and 5 hp) finds her encounter with the evil Uul going tragically against her. Her wounds are Head 7 and Right Leg 9. Uul casts a *fireball* spell at Kairin, doing 8 hp damage and delivers a general wound to her. Kairin realizes that she is out-matched and seeks escape. She dashes from Uul's courtyard and falls into a concealed pit in the marble corridor, suffering another 5 hp of damage and another general wound; her wounds are now Head 7, Right Leg 9, General 8 and 5. Uul peers

into the pit and laughs at his helpless opponent.

Overwhelming pain

Should a character receive a great number of painful wounds, he will be unable to do anything but scream and moan in agony until the wounds are healed or until the character is put out of his misery. He will be blind and deaf with pain, and thus unable to defend himself; treat such characters as "totally immobile" for hit determination (see *DMG*, p. 67). The number of wounds necessary to create a state of overwhelming pain depends upon the character's constitution score.

Table 8
Number of Wounds Causing Overwhelming Pain

Character's constitution overwhelming pain	Number of wounds to cause
3-15	4
16-17	5
18	6
19+	Immune to O.P.

Overwhelming pain has no effect on characters reduced to zero hit points or below or on characters rendered otherwise unconscious.

Optional Rules

The following optional rules for specific healing, avoided wounds, and pain for mounts and monsters add even more realism to the advanced rules.

Specific healing

In the basic rules, healing affects all wounds equally. There are times, though, when a character might wish to heal one wound and not worry about another. With specific healing, the character affects only the wounds that he wants to heal.

Cure light/serious/critical wounds and (limited) *wish* spells provide specific healing. Magic items of similar powers also heal only the desired wounds, as do substances such as a *salve of healing* or other similarly controllable means of regaining lost hit points. The *heal* spell removes all wounds and damage, and a *perapt of wound closure* heals all wounds to one point below the character's threshold of pain.

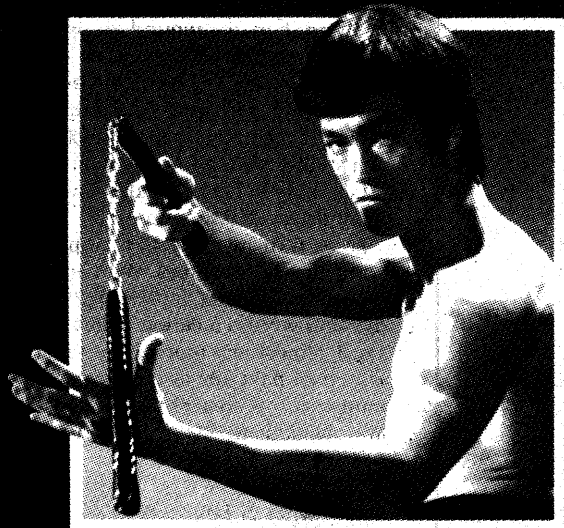
Avoided wounds

Sometimes loss of hit points in battle comes not from wounds but from the strain and exertion of fighting (see *DMG*, p. 82). More experienced characters are more capable of avoiding the wounds that

might otherwise have been caused by their opponents' successful hits; although the victim suffers hit point loss, no serious performance-affecting wounds occur. The chance of avoiding wounds depends on the character's class and level; fighters, cavaliers, and monks have the advantage over other classes due to their training. (Use Table 9 *only* when the damage from an attack exceeds the character's threshold of pain and in an event where a wound can occur.)

Example: Aan, confronted deep in the tunnels of the evil Temple of Mar-Phu, must fight to the death against the wicked priestess Phulu Jiai (8th-level dark elven cleric, 40 hp, constitution 13, threshold of pain 13% and 5 hp). Aan swings his thick sword at Jiai's body and strikes for 9 hp damage, enough to create a wound for Jiai. As an 8th-level cleric, Jiai has a 12% chance of avoiding a wound resulting from the blow. She rolls a 66 on d100; the blade slices cleanly through her skin (the DM records "Body 9" on her NPC sheet). Enraged, Jiai plunges her diamond dagger through Aan's breastplate and into his chest, causing 10 hp damage. Aan has an 8% chance of avoiding the wound; he rolls 6 on d100. Aan loses 10 hp, but suffers no wound (the dagger merely grazed his flesh instead of puncturing a lung). Had Aan been 3rd level, he would not have had the skill to twist away in time, and Jiai's dag-

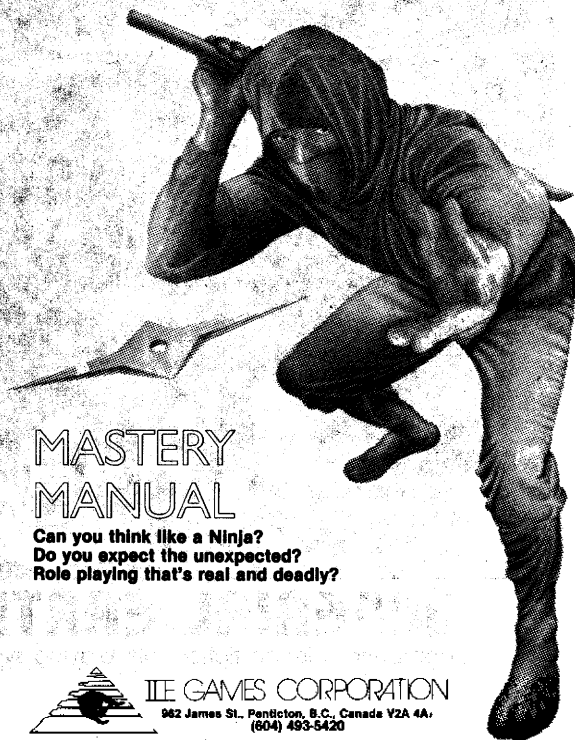
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Table 9
Chance of Avoiding Wounds

Character class	0	1-3	4-5	6-7	8	9	10+
Cavalier	7%	15%	18%	21%	25%	30%	40%
Paladin	na	5%	8%	12%	17%	23%	30%
Fighter	5%	10%	15%	20%	30%	40%	50%
Barbarian	na	20%	22%	24%	26%	28%	30%
Ranger	na	5%	10%	15%	20%	30%	45%
Monk	na	30%	35%	40%	45%	60%	80%
Other classes	na	3%	6%	9%	12%	15%	20%

Table 10
Thresholds of Pain for Mounts

Earthbound mounts
 Donkey/mule: 40%
 Draft horse: 10%
 Horse, riding: 14% + d6%
 Ox: 40%
 Pony: 5%
 Unicorn: 15%
 Warhorse, light: 15%
 Warhorse, medium: 20%
 Warhorse, heavy: 30%
 Wild horse: 25%

Flying mounts
 Dragon horse: 20%
 Griffon: 30% + d10%
 Hippogriff: 25%
 Nightmare: 40% + d20%
 Pegasus: 15%
 Peryton: 20%
 Wyvern: 50%

ger would have caused a terrible wound that could have hindered his performance.

Pain in mounts and monsters

Mounts can feel pain just as characters can; if something wounds a mount too badly, it will be unable to bear its rider. Mounts use the same pain rules that characters use, although there are a few differences, as detailed below.

Table 11
Wound Locations for Earthbound Mounts

d100 roll	Location of wound
01-17	Head
18-40	Body
41-55	Right foreleg
56-70	Right hindleg
71-85	Left foreleg
86-00	Left hindleg

Table 12
Wound Locations for Flying Mounts *

d100 roll	Location of wound
01-18	Head
19-36	Body
37-43	Right foreleg
44-50	Right hindleg
51-57	Left foreleg
58-64	Left hindleg
65-82	Right wing
83-00	Left wing

* For wyverns and peryton, roll on Table 5 to determine the wound location for earthbound mounts and substitute "wing" for "foreleg."

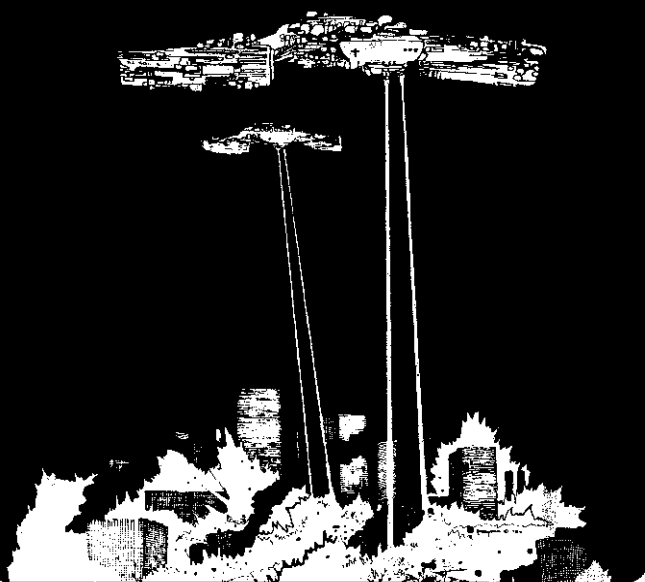
If a mount has wounds on two or more legs or more than one wound on any leg, it will be unable to support its rider. If a mount has wounds on three or more legs or more than one wound on two different legs, it is unable to walk at all. A wound on the wing of a flying mount prevents it from flying. (Optional rule: A flying mount with a threshold of pain of 25% or more can still fly with one wing wound, though it is unable to bear its rider. Two wing wounds ground the mount.)

Some DMs might wish to apply these pain rules to monsters. With arbitrary thresholds of pain (try 5% + 2% per hit die) and wound location tables (if necessary), almost any monster can feel the effects of pain just as characters do. Some monsters, because of their very nature, are oblivious to pain (golems, undead, elementals, etc.)

And what of Loviatar? Allow the Maiden of Pain to create overwhelming pain in any wounded character for as long as she desires or until all the character's wounds heal. Loviatar is immune to pain of any kind, and wounds from her dagger of ice

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NIBAR'S KEEP



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The game of magical arena dueling

. . . Chief among these authorities was the powerful but reclusive wizard, Nibar. Although he held no official title, Nibar alone possessed the influence to keep the quarrelsome nobles of Eloc from warring among themselves.

When subtler measures failed, Nibar's last resort was to summon the champions of the hostile factions to his keep, deep in the Halimec Mountains. There, the feud was resolved in a strange and magical arena, deep underground.

No observers were witness to these combats, and the principals were sworn to silence in their doings. Still, there were rumors of the weird allies that Nibar's spells summoned, each coming to the aid of one warrior or the other. Monsters were said to appear out of thin air, and the dead battled with the living.

As for the warriors themselves, both were said to always survive, although not always unharmed. If a fight led to a standstill, the battle was replayed after the contestants rested. Whether or not Nibar secretly used his arcane arts to influence the outcome of such a duel, none here can say. The quarrel which brought the warriors to Nibar's Keep was always ended, however with a judgment in favor of the victorious.

In such a way was the peace of the land preserved, and such was Nibar's power that no one dared challenged his rulings, for all of Nibar's many many days. . . .

INTRODUCTION

Nibar's Keep is a short game of tactical combat for two players. Each player assumes the role of a warrior in Nibar's arena. Each warrior is aided by a force of diverse creatures, some of which are magically summoned after the game has started. To win the game, a player must accomplish either of the following two objectives:

- 1. Move one's own warrior onto one of the two *rune* hexes guarded by the opponent; or,
- 2. Inflict two wounds on the opponent's warrior.

Two six-sided dice are required for play. The board contains four types of hexes. The dark hexes represent solid stone; no counter can enter or pass them. The Plank gray hexes represent open space and can be entered by all counters. The T hexes are magical teleportation hexes. Finally, the hexes with circular designs are rune hexes. Teleportation hexes and rune hexes can be entered by any counter, and each has a special significance explained below.

GAME SET-UP

When preparing the game for play; it is recommended that the gamers carefully cut the counter sheets out of the center insert, then glue them to a piece of poster board before cutting out the individual counters. (Make sure the glue is spread evenly over the backs of the counters before attaching them to the cardboard.) This process makes the counters sturdier, easier to move, and less likely to have their positions changed by a draft or vibrations—as caused by rolling dice, for example.

Place the board between the two players so that two rune hexes are along the sides nearest to each player. Three of the Ts in the teleportation hexes should then face each player (the central teleportation hex in the nearest row and the Two end teleportation hexes in the far row). The three facing teleportation hexes "belong" to a player and function for his counters. The three nonfacing teleportation hexes function only for the opponent's counters. Each player defends the two closest rune hexes.

There are 10 different types of counters, each having three numbers and a letter. The number in the upper left corner indicates that counter's *attack factor*, and the number in the upper right corner indicates that counter's *defense factor*. The number in the lower right corner indicates how many hexes that counter

can move each turn. The letter on the counter is the first letter of the name of the counter. The types of counters are as follows:

Table 1
Counter Types

A. Archer	O. Ooze
B. Barrier	S. Skeleton
C. Cave bear	T. Troll
L. Lizard	W. Warrior (4-4-4)
M. Magician	W. Wounded warrior (3-3-3)

Determine which player controls the red counters, using any suitable method. Both counter sets are identical, but the player with the red counters places first and moves first.

Two types of counters represent the warrior — the (unwounded) warrior counter and the wounded-warrior counter. The other counters represent magical beings which are animated by Nibar's magic and are referred to as *creatures*. One set of creatures consists of eight counters — one each of the eight types (archer, barrier, cave bear, lizard, magician, ooze, skeleton, troll). For the standard scenario explained here, each player needs one warrior counter, one wounded-warrior counter, two complete sets of creatures, plus an additional barrier counter. All other counters should be put aside to avoid confusion.

Each player begins the game with nine counters on the board: the warrior counter and one complete set of eight creatures. Starting with the player with the red counters, each player places three counters in turn until both players have placed all nine counters. The counters must be placed in the four nearest rows of hexes — up to and including the rows with small diamond shapes in them. (The diamond shapes merely serve to indicate the limits of the set-up area; they have no effect on play.) Only one counter may be placed in a hex. Counters may be placed in the rune hexes, but not, of course, in the impassable dark hexes.

The remaining nine counters (the second set of creatures plus the additional barrier) are placed along the side of the board to each player's right, in clear view of both players. The wounded-warrior counters are also set aside, to be exchanged for warrior counters if the warriors are wounded in combat. (Each of a player's warrior counters, wounded or not, represent the same warrior). Neither player ever has both his warrior counter and his wounded-warrior counter on the board at the same time.)

PLAYING THE GAME

The player with the red counters goes first; players then alternate turns until one player wins. For the first three turns of the game, each player's turn has three distinct phases which must take place in strict order: (1) *creature arrival*, (2) *movement*, and (3) *combat*.

Phase 1: Creature arrival

In the first phase ("creature arrival"), a player selects three creatures out of the group that did not begin on the board and enters them in his three facing teleportation hexes. One creature must be placed in each teleportation hex, but the player chooses which creatures to put, where. Any counter, even a friendly counter already in a facing teleportation hex is *eliminated* by the arrival of the entering counter. (It is permissible to leave counters in the teleportation hexes of either player, but obviously this is often unwise to do — especially during the first three turns for each player.) If a warrior counter is so "eliminated," it is considered to have been wounded twice, thus losing the game (see "special combat eases"). After the third turn, no creatures will remain to enter the game board, leaving two phases: (1) movement, and (2) combat.

Phase 2: Movement

In the movement phase, each player can move some, all, or none of his counters, including the creatures entered that turn. A counter may move in any combination of directions for any number of hexes (moving into one adjacent hex at a time) up to the limit allowed by its movement number. For example, a counter with a movement of 4 can move 0-4 hexes each turn. A counter can move through any friendly counter, but at the end of a player's movement phase, *no hex can contain more than one counter*. A counter cannot move onto or through enemy counters, or through impassable dark hexes. (Players familiar with war games should note that there are no zones of control — i.e., counters do not have to cease movement just because they move to a hex adjacent to an enemy counter.)

Starting with the fourth turn (after all the creatures have been entered), each player has the option of *teleporting one counter* each turn during movement. Such a teleportation is, in effect, a “free” move from one of the player's facing teleportation hexes to another of the facing teleportation hexes (never to or from either an ordinary hex, nor to or from one of the *opponent's* teleportation hexes). If the teleportation hex to which a counter is teleported is occupied, the previously occupying counter (even if friendly) is *eliminated*, and cannot re-enter the game.

A counter which is teleported can still move normally. For example, a counter with a movement of 4 might move two hexes onto a teleportation hex facing that player, teleport to another facing teleportation hex, and then move two more hexes. Teleporting one counter per turn is always *optional*, and a counter can move onto a teleportation hex without teleporting.

Phase 3: Combat

After *all* movement has been completed, the combat phase begins. Four particular counters — the archer, barrier, magician, and warrior — may involve “special cases” in combat, which are explained below. The general combat rules are explained here.

To attack an enemy counter, a friendly counter must be in a hex adjacent to the enemy after the movement phase has been concluded. Each counter adjacent to an enemy counter can attack, but each enemy counter can only be attacked *once* per turn. Thus, all counters attacking the same enemy counter must do so at the same time, in a combined attack. Combat is always optional and never results in losses for the attacking player. A player's counters attack only once during their own combat phase, and never attack during the opponent's combat phase.

During the combat phase, a player must first state *all* of his projected attacks, noting which friendly counters are attacking which enemy counters. Next, the results of all attacks are determined by rolling two six-sided dice for each attack. The attacking player may roll for each attack in any order desired.

To determine if an attack is successful, first add the *attack factors* of all the friendly counters attacking a particular enemy counter. Next, subtract the *defense factor* of the defending enemy counter (remember that since only one counter can occupy any hex, only one counter can be the object of a friendly counter's attack). The resulting number will be a positive number, a negative number, or zero. This result is then referenced on the “COMBAT” table beside the playing board under the column labelled “DIFF” (difference). Across from that number (in the “r2d6” column) is the minimum number that must be rolled on two six-sided dice in order for the attack to be successful (i.e., that number or higher must be rolled).

Examples: A magician, with an attack factor of 1, attacks a warrior, with a defense factor of 4. The difference is -3; thus, a 12 must be rolled for the magician's attack to succeed. If the troll and the cave bear together attack the archer, the difference is +6 (4+3-1). Looking at the “+5 and up” row of the combat table, we see that any total of 4 or higher results in a successful attack.

If the attack is unsuccessful, there is no result, and the counters remain where they stand; If the attack is successful, the defending counter is eliminated and removed from play. (Be careful not to confuse eliminated counters with counters that

have not yet entered the game in the first three turns!) If the attacking player so desires, one of the attacking counters may be moved into the space vacated by the elimination of a defending counter. The decision of whether or not to “advance after combat” in this way must be made *immediately*; if the advance is not made before another combat roll is made, it can never be made. This is the only circumstance in which movement during the combat phase is allowed.

Special combat cases

We now consider four special cases. First, we deal with the **archer**. In addition to being able to attack from an adjacent hex, the archer can attack from *any* distance as long as there is a *straight* line of hexes between the archer and its target. This line must not be blocked by intervening counters (friendly or enemy) or by impassable spaces. The archer only has a defense factor of 1, but it can sometimes attack from so far away that there is no danger of a return attack during the opponent's next combat phase. The archer never advances after combat.

The barrier and the magician are best considered together. The **barrier** has no attack factor or defense factor, as it is a magical obstruction which neither attacks other counters nor can be harmed by conventional attacks. The barrier serves to block enemy counters while permitting friendly counters to pass through it.

The only counter that is effective against the barrier is the **magician**. Instead of making a normal attack during the combat phase, the magician — if it is adjacent to the barrier — can attempt to *dispel* the barrier. Two six-sided dice are rolled in this instance. A roll of 6 or higher dispels the barrier, and a roll of 4 or 5 has no effect — however, a roll of 2 or 3 causes the magician to be eliminated instead! A magician cannot make an ordinary attack in the same combat phase in which it tries to dispel a barrier.

If a successful attack is made on the **warrior**, the warrior counter is replaced with the **wounded-warrior** counter. If a successful attack is then made on the wounded warrior, the warrior is too badly hurt to continue, and the player of the opposing warrior has won. The game can also be automatically won by moving one's own warrior into either of the opponent's two rune hexes. Nothing is gained by moving any other counter into the rune hexes, however.

Any counter which is eliminated as a result of combat or being displaced while standing on a teleportation hex is removed from play for the duration of the game, and cannot be entered into the game again.

Declaring a draw

Either player can invoke the Draw Rule at any point at which it appears that neither player is going to attack the other. Once invoked, if neither player makes a combat attack for 12 consecutive turns (6 for each player), the game is determined to be a draw.

Advanced scenario

All of the rules for the standard scenario apply, except when in conflict with what is noted here. In the advanced scenario, 18 summoned creatures (two sets plus two extra barriers) are entered instead of nine creatures. Three counters are entered per turn for the first six turns. At the start of the seventh turn, two counters can be teleported per turn. This makes for a total of five barriers per player; if one player loses all of his magicians, the other player might secure a draw by “barricading” all counters behind barriers in such a way that no enemy counter can get through.

Optional creature entry

In the basic rules, a player *must* enter three creatures per turn until all unentered creatures have been entered the game. Optionally, a player may enter none, one, two, or three creatures at the beginning of each movement phase (as long as the original supply of unentered creatures holds out, of course). A player is

now never obliged to enter creatures, but no teleportation of counters is allowed for a player until the turn after the last of that player's creatures have been entered. This rule introduces some devious tactical possibilities, but beware — you may lose the game before you finish entering all of your creatures! Both players must agree to this rule before the game starts in order for it to be in effect. (Be warned that this rule tends to slow the game down somewhat.)

Table 2
Turn Sequence (optional rule not in effect)

- A. Sequence during the first three turns:
1. First (red) player's turn
 - Enter three creatures
 - Movement (no teleportation allowed)
 - Combat resolved
 2. Second (blue) player's turn
 - Enter three creatures
 - Movement (no teleportation allowed)
 - Combat resolved
- B. Sequence during fourth and later turns:
1. First (red) player's turn
 - Movement (teleportation allowed)
 - Combat resolved
 2. Second (blue) player's turn
 - Movement (teleportation allowed)
 - Combat resolved

Table 3
Magician's "Dispel Barrier" Table

2d6 roll	Effect
2-3	Magician eliminated
4-5	No effect
6-12	Barrier eliminated

FINAL NOTES

This game is quite short and simple, so you should be quickly able to discover successful tactics for yourself. Just a word to first-time players: Don't give your foe a cheap victory by forgetting that the warrior can teleport (sometimes past all enemy counters for an easy saunter to a rune hex).

Credits

Game design: C.C. Stoll
Original graphics: Keith Waits
Magazine graphics: Diesel and Paul Jaquays
Playtesting: Stuart York and Wendy Stoll
Inspiration: Nibar of Eloc

Ω

IN the BEGINNING, there was

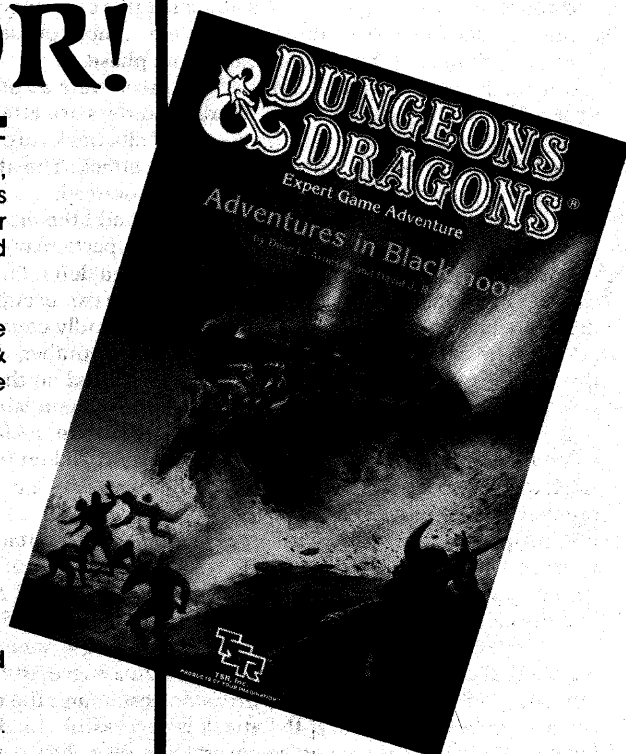
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AT THE WINTER SOLSTICE, IN the land south of the fog-gray sea, the sun rises no more than a handspan above the world's edge. But, to the north, in the homeland of a the Lathit race, it fails to rise clear of the horizon.

It was thence, into the country of her people's conquerors, and on such a day, that Ethyda fled across the fog-gray sea, bearing her unborn son within her.

Aelgis, the old queen — and her grandmother — had made Ethyda ready. In the stolen, fur-trimmed robes of a Lathit wellborn, she sat still as the ancient queen dropped into her eyes the tincture that would hide their revealing blue behind an opaque film of blindness. Slowly, a white curtain grew across her sight. Aelgis took Ethyda's pale face between her time-twisted hands and peered closely.

"It will do," she pronounced. Then, after a pause, "I will be dead soon, perhaps after this night. The king-right lies only in you, my daughter's daughter. Your son must be the one to take vengeance for our people and restore the kingship."

"I will remember," vowed Ethyda.

When young, Aelgis had the fair skin, gold hair, and bright blue eyes of the Angemani race. Her granddaughter Ethyda, though, had the looks of the conquering Lathits: pale of skin, not merely fair, with silvered hair. Only her eyes, blue, not the light gray of the fog people, betrayed her true blood.

Yet Ethyda still bore the king-right of the Angemani, for among her people the king-right was carried by the female line. The last Angemani king was now long dead, Aelgis's king, slain with all the men of fighting age in that dark night of slaughter when the Lathits had come down upon them.

Then Hroln, the chieftain of the raiders, came to the queen and killed her two young sons also so that the king's line of the Angemani would be forever lost, for he did not know their laws. But the queen they took, and all the other women, in a winter's-long night of rapine.

Aelgis, calling on Vatarr, the Angemani god, cursed the Lathit Hroln and all his line. From the seed he was planting within her, she vowed, would arise her blood again to have vengeance upon his. On the blood of her husband and sons, she made this oath.

Thus was the queen's daughter Fridis born, and in Fridis the king-right was still alive. But Fridis was also the daughter of the Lathit lord Hroln. Now, though the Lathit warriors were lusty men and kept the conquered women of the Angemani in their beds, they were proud of their pure blood and kept their crossbred offspring as thralls. So it was one day that Hroln chanced to see the young Fridis and threw her to the ground and had his way with her, though she was his own daughter, for that counted as nothing to him, and she being but a thrall.

Thus the curse of Aelgis wrought, for Fridis conceived of Hroln and the child she bore would have the king-right of the Angemani though of Hroln's blood. But Fridis brought forth a daughter and died in the bearing of her.

Across the Fog-Gray Sea

by Lois Tilton

Illustrations by Stephen E. Fabian

The king-right, then, and all the hopes of the Aelgis rested in that daughter, Etyda.

Now, so far had the lust of the conquerors spread their blood among the conquered that only among the old did there remain any of the pure Angemani race. The aging Lathit lord began to have misgivings on this score, and he bade the men of his new domain to send north and find wives of their own kind from across the sea. Further, he decreed that all male infants born with gray eyes to a woman of Angemani blood should be killed so they could not be taken for men of the ruling race.

Hroln had two sons grown to manhood then, and the first, as his father willed, had married a wellborn Lathit. But the younger, Orri, was smitten secretly with love for the maiden Etyda. It mattered not to Orri that she was of the conquered race, nor did he know or care that she was of blood twice too close to him. He would have no other woman. Thus would the curse of Aelgis be fulfilled.

Etyda spurned Orri's demands, yet he persisted until at last his lust overwhelmed him, and he forced his way upon her. But after the act, he begged for her forgiveness. She would give it, finally, but the price of his absolution was a silver betrothal ring. Although in fear of his father Hroln, Orri did give Etyda the ring-pledge, and then she came willingly to his bed.

Now Etyda was with child. Aelgis alone knew its true lineage, yet all knew of what blood such a child would be, all but one eighth of the pure Lathit strain. Gray eyes it would have, and the pale coloring of its fathers, and such a child would be marked for death by Hroln's decree. So Aelgis took care that Etyda concealed her condition, for the child she bore might be the Angemani king.

Then she prepared the potion that would hide the revealing blue of her granddaughter's eyes, and gave to her a final token, a medallion torn from the dead body of her husband, the last Angemani king. She summoned a man — Egmond, by name — of her people whom she knew to be loyal to the old blood. In the name of Vatar, Egmond swore to deliver his new queen safely across the fog-gray sea. In a stolen Lathit boat, Etyda sailed northward into exile, bearing with her the medallion, a silver ring, her unborn son, and the old queen's curse.

II

The heavy broadsword hit the shield, jarring Aarn's shoulder as he absorbed the blow and blocked his opponent's strike. Using his weight and strength against the other fighter, Aarn slashed down with his own sword. The man got his shield up in time to deflect the strike, but Aarn continued to press the attack.

The Lathit style of fighting was unsubtle, relying mainly on the fighter's strength. Aarn had been trained from boyhood to bear the massive shield and wield the weight of the weapons throughout hours of combat, though his muscles burned with fatigue. In the end, the man who could endure no more would be the loser, his arms failing, his reactions slowed by exhaustion until he would be open to his opponent's blow. It was a crude, brutal way of fighting, and deadly.

Within the oven of his helmet, Aarn's hair dripped with sweat in spite of the day's chill. The leather-wrapped sword grip was damp with it. Again and again he slashed and cut, battering the other man's defenses, never slowing the tempo of the attack. At last, the other's sword was flung away: the signal of resignation.

With rasping breath, Taalor gasped, "Enough. No more for me today."

Taalor rested his shield on the ground and pulled the helmet from his steaming head. Aarn lowered his shield, his own breath coming hard. Although he was weary, Aarn would have had the weapons practice continue, but they were the only two left in the yard. Resigned, then, Aarn pulled off his own helmet.

The two shieldmen gathered up their practice gear and headed toward the armory, dragging with fatigue. Aarn's shield was weighted with lead, and his practice sword and axe were heavier than most. Yet, even with that handicap, Aarn had bested Taalor, one of the best of Lord Ostri's shieldmen. He stripped off his rank, sweaty leathers and went to wash.

Taalor followed. They were all of them, shieldmen, in the same state: ambitious freeborn or wellborn younger sons with no hall of their own. Their future would be to serve in another man's hall and call him lord, if they could not win themselves some land of their own.

Aarn was known by all to be the foster son of a landholder, Lodi, an honorable man. Yet, he was not of Lodi's own blood, and so could not inherit his land. Aarn's mother had been a widow of a wellborn landholder, so the tale went, who had come, shipwrecked, upon Lodi's coast. Aarn was the son of that unknown man, but it seemed that the man's family had taken the land for itself and that the widow with her unborn child had fled for her life. After her son was born, Lodi had married that lady, who was most beautiful, although blind.

It was a tale that appealed to Taalor, for it did much to explain a certain grim purpose that seemed to have hold of Aarn at times. He supposed that his shield companion meant to return to that land and challenge for it: a fine ambition for a Lathit warrior. But Aarn himself would never discuss the matter of his birth.

Taalor and Aarn came late into the hall, where the meal was already served. They found-seats at one of the tables and reached to fill their plates with meat and bread, while calling to a servant to bring ale. Seeing them, Joln, a shield companion, left his own seat and made room for himself next to Aarn. "At practice, again, I suppose."

Aarn nodded, his mouth full of bread. Then; swallowing, "Your turn, next, whenever that wrist is healed." Joln was good. He did not have the sheer strength of the best fighters, but he was quick, very quick, and Aarn meant to be quicker.

"Always at practice! When will it be time for us to use our shields?" Joln urged his friends, his hands grasping their wrists. It was his plan to journey to the south and enlist in the emperor's own bodyguard. A man could find his fortune in the empire. "Do you want to serve in another man's hall all your life?"

Aarn was silent. Why would any Lathit warrior want to look higher than to be weapons master in the yard of a

lord like Ostri? Or perhaps one of the shieldmen of the king? A man could win land in such service, to pass on to his sons.

But Aarn was not simply a Lathit warrior. There was always the memory of his mother's voice, urgent and low. "You are not just as other men, Aelward, my son, the king. Your domain is waiting, across the sea, for you to reclaim it from the slayers of your ancestors. And you have sworn to take it back."

Yes, he had sworn. He had sworn under that other, secret name of his, an oath to a god he did not worship, to Vatarr, the god of his mother's people. His blood, and hers, had been spilled to bind him to fulfillment of the curse.

Now, Joln's challenge was stirring that uneasy memory. He had sworn. But the oath was to Vatarr, and Aarn's own god was Kroln Red-hand, the god of a Lathit warrior, as Lodi his father had taught him.

Lodi had always treated Aarn as a son of his own, and he was aware that his wife intended the boy to win back a stolen inheritance across the sea, that she had taught him the language of that country. Lodi approved. Aarn would have no better chance to win land of his own. To that end, he began early to teach his foster son the use of weapons.

Yet Aarn had never attempted to return to his homeland. As long as he did not, his god was Kroln, not Vatarr. The curse and the oath belonged to Aelward, the Angemani king. But Aarn still felt their weight.

Joln, now, gave him an assessing look. "The tale is that there is some domain where you have a lawful land claim. The rest of us must use our shields to make our way in the world. It might be worth it, to follow a man who could claim such a lordship."

"Is it true, Aarn?" asked Taalor, with an eager light of hope in his eyes.

Aarn's hand touched the ancient medallion that hung beneath his shirt. It had been his for two score years. How much longer could he wait? But it was a silver ring that he brought forth to show his companions.

"My mother has this ring from the son of the lord who conquered that domain. But his house and hers were enemies, so they made the ring-pledge in secret. When they were discovered, she fled, in fear of the lord, for all men of her line were killed, and she had no one to protect her child. I swore to her that I would have vengeance."

"A strange tale," Joln said, thoughtfully. "Yet you have the proof?"

Aarn handed it to him, and Joln rolled it between two fingers, noting the heavy silver of a wellborn's ring.

"Orri," he read, and looked to Aarn in question.

"Yes," said Aarn, though his throat was tight as he spoke that name so long kept secret. "The younger son of Lord Hroln, who took the lands across the sea. The older son, Fenn, is lord there now."

"And what of Orri?" asked Taalor.

"I hear that he is dead, also," said Aarn, "not that I mourn him."

"Yes," said Joln, "I have heard of this Fenn, that he is a hard and ruthless man. His brother's death, perhaps, was too convenient." He paused, in thought. "This ring, then, gives you blood-right to his land."

"Yes," Aarn said, taking it back. "Perhaps, some day . . ." It was Hroln's blood in his veins, that same blood the curse was invoked to destroy.

His friends, though, knew nothing of such things, of curses and the Angemani king-right. They thought only in Lathit terms, of blood-right and challenge, as Aarn himself had been taught by Lodi. But there was more they did not know that he could not reveal. His friends would swear to him, he knew, to support his claim to Fenn's land. But he could not make himself accept their oaths.

Sometimes, though, the gods act, to bring about what they have ordained.

Not many days later, Aarn was crossing the main courtyard when he heard cries of pain coming from around a corner. Wondering, he looked there and found a man beating another with the flat of a sword, a man who lay unresisting on the ground, moaning, whose hair was bright like the sunlight this land so seldom saw. Egmond, his mother's old servant, had hair like that, but no one had ever beaten Egmond — not, at least, Aarn thought, since he had known him. But he had heard Egmond's stories, and his mother's. This man being beaten, Aarn realized, was an Angemani thrall.

A hot rage overcame him. He strode up to the unknown Lathit and felled him to the ground with a single blow to the face. The man stared up at him, shaking his head to clear it, and then sprang to his feet with a bellow of anger.

"Who is this thrallson? I'll see you in the deepest pit of Hell for that!" he cried, looking around for the sword which had been jarred from his hand.

"You are speaking to me," snarled Aarn, "and I do not like your words. So pick up your sword, and show me how you use it when the man you face has one of his own!"

Understanding then came to the other man of why he had been attacked. "What I do to my thrall is my own affair," he said, "and defending your miserable life had better be yours!"

By this time, others had gathered, drawn by the sound of angry words. Then came the voice of Faalnor, the weapons master, breaking into the confusion.

"Hold! What trouble here? Aarn! This man is Graan, a guest of Lord Ostri."

Aarn hesitated. The lord of a hall was sworn to protect a guest. It was unlawful to kill this man Graan . . . unless, of course, he offered formal challenge.

That possibility was also on the mind of Faalnor. "Has there been challenge here?" he asked.

"Why, this man attacked me, struck me down, for no cause!" accused Graan.

"Well?" asked Faalnor of Aarn. "And what have you to say?"

"I was offended by his behavior," said Aarn, with the arrogance of sheer bravado, for he had attacked a guest and could never explain why he had acted. "And then he did insult my birth."

That left fault on both sides. "What man was first to bare his steel?"

Graan then looked confused, for his own sword had been drawn before the dispute had started. "He interfered as I was chastising my thrall, there," he explained, pointing to the Angemani, whose fresh bruises and welts bore witness to

the truth of what he said.

Faalnor's face took on a look of distaste. Lord Ostri forbade such treatment of his own thralls. Yet the thrall in question was not Lord Ostri's, and his master was a guest.

Faalnor knew well who would win if challenge were issued, although he saw that Graan was eager to fight. It would not do, under these circumstances, to have Lord Ostri's guest killed.

"I say that there has been no challenge," he declared. "Everyone go back to his own duties, now!"

The two antagonists parted, bristling. They had both wanted the fight, but Faalnor spoke in the lord's name. Yet, they thought, both of them, that there might be another time.

"What was that about?" asked Taalor, who had been among the crowd.

"Oh," said Aarn. "At home we have a servant — his name is Egmond — and I have known him since I was a boy. This thrall, he looked like old Egmond, and I did not like to see him beaten, not like that."

"But it was the man's own thrall," Taalor objected.

Yes, as I would have been, Aarn told himself, if I had been born in the lands my ancestors ruled. The lands that I could claim.

He now understood why his mother had blinded her own eyes to conceal their color. He could feel the anxiety she must have had, at his birth, to know if her son's would be pure Lathit gray.

"I know — I suppose I did not stop and think," he mumbled.

But his world had been changed forever. He had now seen with his own eyes what had before been only a tale: the subjection of the people he knew to be his own. It had not been just Egmond he had seen, moaning on the ground; it had been himself as well, or any other man of his blood. On that day, he swore again to destroy the rule of Hroln's heir. But, this time, he made the oath from his own heart, in free acceptance of his destiny. And he called also on Kroln Red-hand to give him the strength to fulfill the curse that Aelgis had made in Vatarr's name.

Now his companions could see the new look of resolution in Aarn's eyes. "You mean to do it now, don't you?" Joln asked that night in their quarters. "You are going to challenge the claim of that man's lord." For he knew that Graan served Lord Fenn.

Aarn's jaw muscles clenched, but he nodded acknowledgment.

"Then you have my shield behind you," Joln stated firmly.

"And mine, if you want it," Taalor added.

And would you follow me if you looked into my eyes and discovered they were blue? Aarn asked them silently.

He well knew the king's law, that there was nothing which spoke of a man's blood, only of his descent from his father in a valid union. A ring-pledge was enough to establish that descent, and he had the ring, as proof. By law, Aarn was the wellborn son of Orri, son of Lord Hroln. But there is the law, and there is what is in men's hearts. He had been accepted here on the word of his foster father, Lodi. Yet even Lodi never knew the whole truth. His mother had never dared to reveal it.

What, then, might Joln and Taalor say, if they knew?

Thrallson, would they call him? Bastard? Perhaps not. This was Lord Ostri's domain, not Hroln's. But would they swear shield-oath to an Angemani crossbreed? Could they take him for their lord?

And yet Aarn knew he could not take Fenn's domain without support behind him. So he accepted Joln's shield-oath, and Taalor's, though as they swore he reviled himself for deceiving them about his birth. And, so bound, they set sail together on the venture, south across the fog-gray sea.

III

As they climbed up from the mists of the beach, the sun grew brighter, and the fields and forests of the southern land were bathed in its light. The Lathits shaded their eyes from the unaccustomed brightness, and Aarn could now see why Hroln had sailed south to take this land.

A large hall stood overlooking the sea, and from it a man came toward them, demanding to know why they had come to the domain of Lord Fenn.

Aarn stepped forward, hand resting on his sword hilt, as the hands of the others were on their own. Their arms and clothing all proclaimed them Lathit wellborn, and combat ready. For they knew well that all sorts of baseborn adventurers sought employment in the halls of lords like Fenn, but as wellborn, they were entitled to the respect of honored guests.

So Aarn spoke with pride in his voice as he declared their names and lineages. "We have been recently in the service of Lord Ostri," he said, "but tales have reached us of good venturing to be had here in the south. So we sailed here, to look at this land and to see if some lord might have need of good shieldmen."

Then the man bowed in welcome and offered them guest-right in Fenn's hall. Each of the companions took up his own weapons, while a thrall followed behind with the rest of their possessions. The thrall, Aarn saw, could have almost been taken for freeborn Lathit.

Fenn's man led the strangers into the hall, filed with armed warriors, Fenn's shieldmen. A servant came to their table to bring them food and ale.

"Lord Fenn will come himself to greet you shortly when he has finished with his present business," their guide declared.

Aarn reached for his cup and drained it down. *Fenn!* At last he would lay his own eyes on that man, three times his uncle, whom he was oath-bound to slay. Refilling the cup, he gripped its handle tightly as he kept watch on the doorway through which Fenn must enter.

Yet it was another who came and, seeing Aarn, shouted out, "You! Thrallson!"

These words cleared the hall of all idle talk, and eyes went to Aarn, who stood, hand on his sword hilt. It was Graan, who had been at Lord Ostri's hall. Aarn's jaw tightened. This man knew him, and he knew too much. He might suspect their true purpose in coming to Fenn's hall and give warning. He might even have come to suspect Aarn's true birth.

Then he realized that here he was the guest and free to offer challenge. A fierce smile grew on his face as he faced Graan, who had provoked him here, in the hearing of these

many witnesses, to finish their old quarrel.

Around them rang shouts of encouragement, as Fenn's men realized that there would be a duel between Graan and one of the strangers. A grudge match, surely, and to the death, they clamored to each other. Within minutes, tables and benches had been pushed back to clear a space in the middle of the hall, and both men had taken up their arms.

Graan brandished an axe passed to him by one of his comrades. Taalor quickly handed Aarn his own axe, knowing that it was his favored choice of weapon and more deadly than the sword in his powerful hands.

Gripping it in his right hand, the shield on his left arm as if weightless, Aarn stepped to the center of the makeshift arena. The blood sang with anticipation as it raced through his veins. Graan, seeing now the combat lust in Aarn, held back, cast a glance around him for support. But the whole hall rang with the shouts of men eager for the contest. Honor forbade him to back down, even if he faced Kroln Red-hand himself.

So Graan died, fighting.

Blow after blow fell against his shield, until his arm, numbed, could not withstand the force of Aarn's axe as it swept down, seeking his life. He had hardly the chance to use his own weapon, so desperate was his defense. But Aarn did not seek to prolong the combat and give his opponent a chance to yield with honor. First- blood was the last, spouting from Graan's neck as Aarn's axe clove through.

During the brief span of time the duel lasted, the shouting had diminished, and silence slowly fell over the hall as the men saw how Graan was overmastered. At the end, the clangor of the lifeless body falling to the floor on its shield rang loud. Aarn, blood-sprayed, turned into that silence to take a fresh cup of ale from Taalor's hand. His breath still came easily as he poured it down his throat, and the shield still swung lightly on his arm.

"By Kroln's hand!" came a voice then, which rang throughout the hall. "That was swiftly done, man! And now I have one shieldman the less."

Fenn! thought Aarn, and slowly turned to face this man, his father's brother and his mother's, his enemy.

He saw a pale face, lined and hard, stiff with amazement and outrage. Yet it was clear that the challenge had been rightly done and witnessed.

Then Joln stepped forward, saying lightly, "Well, Lord, a man so easily lost must be easily missed. Perhaps you will soon find a better to replace him."

"And would you swear to serve in his place?" asked Fenn, tightly. "Or would he?"

"It might be that we would," Joln replied. "We are lately from Lord Ostri's hall, which you must know, as I recall seeing this fellow make himself disagreeable there," he continued, glancing in the direction of the floor where Graan still lay in his blood. "Lord Ostri paid his shieldmen well, but his domain was somewhat short of opportunities. My friends and I had heard that things were different here on the other side of the sea."

"Then, of course; you may have guest-right in my hall." Fenn's voice was still strained. He liked not the thought of these strangers sitting in his hall and slaughtering his loyal men. Fenn had thought Graan a competent shieldman, until a few minutes before.

"You are gracious, Lord," said Joln. "My companions and I are glad of your welcome."

Later, in the guest quarters, Aarn received his companions' congratulations. But Joln was not fully pleased. Of course, the insult in the middle of the hall had been unsupportable, but, still . . .

"Was it truly necessary?" he asked. "At least, did you have to kill him so well? Now they might begin to suspect your purpose."

"He knew me. He might have warned Fenn to refuse guest-right. I had to kill him quickly."

But Aarn was not as confident as he sounded, not within himself. His true purpose . . . he was resolved to kill Fenn, as the curse demanded of him, to free the Angemani from the oppression of Hroln's line. Was that his purpose, to become their Lathit lord? Was that what he had sworn to?

Joln's next words increased Aarn's misgivings. "We must discover what support Fenn has among his shieldmen, who, might cause trouble for you after he dead."

Fenn's followers — his landholders and shieldmen. Would they ever accept the rule of Aarn Orrisson, mothered by an Angemani thrall — ring-pledge or none? Fenn had a son — there would always be his claim.

But what was the alternative? To lead an uprising of the Angemani? To throw out Lathit rule and restore their ancient king-line? And what would his companions think of that purpose? Of Aelward, the Angemani king? He would truly have deceived them, then.

Aarn went out to the courtyard to be alone with his thoughts. The moon was shining, unshrouded by fog or clouds, and he wished his path of action were as clear.

Then, from the shadow of a wall, a voice called out to him, low, "Master."

Aarn turned toward the sound.

"Master. Over here."

He made out the figure of a man, unarmed and alone.

"It is you, isn't it, the man who fought with Master Graan, at Lord Ostri's hall?"

Aarn acknowledged it. "And you?" he asked.

"Elgard, who was Graan's thrall. I thought it was you."

Aarn realized that this man must be the thrall whom Graan had beaten, the occasion of the quarrel between them.

"I would thank you, Master, for coming to my aid," Elgard said.

"I acted without thought," replied Aarn. "I hope it was not the harder for you afterward because of what I did. But what do you want with me here?"

"Nothing more from you. I only offer my thanks. Graan's heir will be my master now."

Then Aarn spoke in the language of the Angemani, taught him in his childhood, "And what would you do, Elgard, if no Lathit were your master?"

The man's face took on a sudden wariness. "I do not know what you mean," he replied.

"Then tell me this: do you know the name of Aelgis?"

"Years ago, I think there was an old woman of that name. But she has been dead, oh, for many years. . . . Master, how is it that you speak this tongue? Few enough of us remember it, now."

Aarn ignored the question. He asked, "What of the name Aelward — do you know it?"

"It is an Angemani name," Elgard answered, "but I do not know such a man. Perhaps one of the elders would recognize who you mean."

"One more thing," Aarn continued, though losing hope. "Take a look at this medallion. Have you ever seen this device? Does it mean anything to you?"

The thrall shook his head. "I am sorry, Master."

"Do not call me that. Elgard, what would you do if you had a king of your own people?"

"But all of that line were killed, long ago. The Angemani have no king."

"And if one were found?"

"I do not know. If we had a king, could he free us?"

"And what if he would lead you? Could you not fight to free yourselves?"

Elgard shook his head. "They have the weapons. . . ."

"I see," said Aarn. He stared at the man, who could be any Lathit thrall. "Now, Elgard, I must ask you to swear if you would repay your debt to me. . . ."

The thrall nodded.

"Then, you must swear that you will speak of nothing we have said here tonight or that I spoke in-your language. Will you?"

"I will. For I owe you thanks, Master."

"I said not to call me that. My name is . . . Aarn."

Aarn returned to his guest quarters, cast down in spirit, yet now sure that he had only one way to turn. There would be no attempt to lead the Angemani in an uprising against their Lathit masters. He would have to make his claim as Orri's son and challenge Fenn to combat.

Thus he would at least fulfill the curse laid so long ago on Hroln and his line by Aelgis, his mother's grandmother: that one born of both her blood and his own would avenge the killing of her king and sons. The Lathits might then reject his claim. Joln and Taalor might withdraw their support when they learned the truth about the man who had taken their shield-oath. But if he accomplished nothing else, he would have Fenn's death.

IV

The whole of Fenn's domain was assembled in his hall: landholders and shieldmen, all in festive garb. Word of the guests had spread, and today they were expected to swear as shieldmen to Fenn in formal ceremony, followed by a feast.

Fenn sat, face grim, at the high table, with his young son on his right hand and the three newcomers at his left. He had not wanted this. These strangers — protected by guest-right, they had come into his own hall and there killed one of his best men. Such men would surely have ambitions. Fenn mistrusted the whole situation.

But he could not do as he had truly wished, and have the troublesome adventurers quietly eliminated. His men had been overawed by the prowess of the one who had killed Graan. At least, Fenn reflected ominously, he would be protected after they had sworn to him. He meant to have them swear to the boy, too, as added surety.

Now it was time. Fenn nodded to his left, and Aarn stood. "Will you, Aarn," spoke Fenn, "swear to serve me as shieldman, to defend my domain, and to perform loyally all the

duties of that position?"

"I will not."

For a moment, no one breathed.

Then Aarn spoke again. "I can not swear to a man I am going to kill. Fenn, I do lay claim to this domain, and I challenge you to combat for it."

Fenn's face whitened with rage, he seemed to be choking. Beside him, the boy looked one way and another in bewilderment at this turn of events. Finally, he managed to rasp an order to the men filling the hall: "Kill him! Kill them all!"

But Joln rose then, and his voice rang loudly so that they hesitated, reluctant as they had been to attack the man who had so easily dealt with Graan. "No!" he exclaimed. "This is lawful challenge. Aarn has the right. Let no man interfere."

Now Fenn rose also. "No man but I can claim this domain!" he cried. "He has no right, whoever he is!"

"Not so," said Aarn, as he stood in the middle of the whole assembly, shield on the floor before him. His throat was threatening to constrict, to choke down the words he had to say. "Hroln, your father, took this land by his sword. But Hroln had another son — your brother, Orri — and his son likewise has a claim. My claim, Fenn."

"Lies!" cried Fenn, to all who would hear him. "My brother died heirless — he had no living son."

"Oh, but you are wrong, Fenn," said Aarn, "for he did have one son, though he knew it not, yet the union was lawful. Look, here, at the proof?"

Aarn reached within his shirt, took forth the ring, and showed it to the hall. Then came Fenn's steward, Hakkor, unbidden, who had known Orri, and he took the ring from Aarn and studied it with care. "It is so," he declared then, and Fenn's shieldmen backed away each a step more from Aarn.

But Fenn's face revealed that he understood at last who Aarn was. "No!" he insisted again. "This is no heir, this has no rights — no more than a thrall! My brother did bed a half-breed wench, it is true. But no matter what he calls himself, this man is bastard breed, nothing more!"

Hearing that, the men surrounding Aarn looked at each other and tensed. He stood his ground, though not able to turn his eyes back to where Taalor and Joln must be standing, hearing this, waiting for him to deny it. Which he could not.

"You have all seen the ring," he said instead, and his words came easier now that the truth had already been said. "You all must know the law. A ring-pledge is enough to form a lawful union between man and woman, no matter if the woman is thrall, no matter her blood. Even you, who rape your daughters and enthrall your own bastards, must know this. Pure Lathit blood I may not have, but *this* does give me challenge-right," Aarn said, holding high the ring.

Fenn ignored his words, urging his men still to attack the thrallson bastard, and Aarn was measuring the distance between them, to be sure of Fenn's life before his shieldmen took him down. They feared his skill, but no man could stand against so many, and a few of the bravest were putting their hands to their weapons when another voice rang out in the hall.

"Before you think to have Aarn dishonorably slain, re-

member this, that my companion and I are witnesses of what will be done here. Now, there are many of you, and it may be that you could, all together, kill the three of us here today. But our families know of our purpose in this land, so think of the blood-feud that you would earn yourselves, even if you have no respect for the king's law."

Aarn's head turned around, and he saw Joln standing at his back with his sword bare in his hand and Taalor beside him. He turned back, face grown suddenly hot, to face Fenn's followers, but the men were already stepping back to confer among themselves. Then one of them stepped forward and said, "Lord Fenn, it was your own man who identified the ring. We cannot deny that it is lawful challenge."

Then Fenn came to realize that he must fight indeed, for he looked this way and that about him and saw no man who would support him. Challenged, his lordship was forfeit, and he feared he was no match for Aarn's skill.

In desperate wrath, then, Fenn called for his arms. Men moved back to give the combatants ample room, as, just the day before, they had done for Graan. Fenn stepped down, shield ready, longsword in hand, for he thought he had the greater reach. He had seen how Graan, on the defensive, had been relentlessly beaten down by his opponent's strength. Without warning, then, he lunged forward with a fierce sword thrust, only to find himself overbalanced, as Aarn, moving with unbelievable quickness, brushed his weapon aside. Then somehow, his enemy was at his unprotected right side and, before he could move to defend himself, had slashed downward through his torso.

Fenn's death scream tore through the hall as he dropped and briefly, spasmodically, shuddered on the floor. Still at the high table, his son sat unmoving, in the grip of horror,

Now the eyes of one man after another turned to the boy, stunned still with the shock of his father's sudden, violent death. Here was the last survivor of Hroln's line, heir to the curse, as well as a rival claimant to the domain.

Aarn looked from the boy to the faces of his companions — his shieldmen — and saw that they would support him even in this. They all knew what the law allowed, and the reason.

Aarn clenched his fists. *Vengeance*, the curse had called for, vengeance on Hroln's line from one of his own blood. Aelgis had invoked it, and the gods had, slowly, wrought. And yet, was he not even more of Hrohr's line than the boy who stared at him?

Fenn, he had been able to hate, if for no other reason than the treatment of his thralls. Very well, then, he had taken Fenn's life and domain from him. But no more! The curse would not have the boy as well, not by Aarn's hand. Let the gods do that deed themselves if they would have it done.

He pushed his way back through the crowd, to the high seat that had been Fenn's and there declared, "I now claim the lordship of this domain. Does any man challenge?"

On his one side, Joln and Taalor stood, wondering what he would do, and on the other, the boy looked up, confused and frightened. But Aarn swept his gaze across the width of the hall, searching out any man who might feel that he dared. None would meet his eyes, and none dared offer challenge. Aarn felt at the same time both relief and anger that no man would step forward to defend the child.

Only then did he look down to his right and lay his hand

on the shoulder of the boy seated there.

"Cousin," he said, "I will be lord here now. Do you understand that?"

The child's head nodded.

"Then I ask, do you wish to fight me, or will you be the first of the men in my domain to swear loyalty?"

Throughout the hall, men exclaimed in an undertone at this, for they did not know what Aarn intended. But the boy was silent in his confusion.

Aarn bent closer. "Cousin, I do not know your name."

"Olni" came the answer.

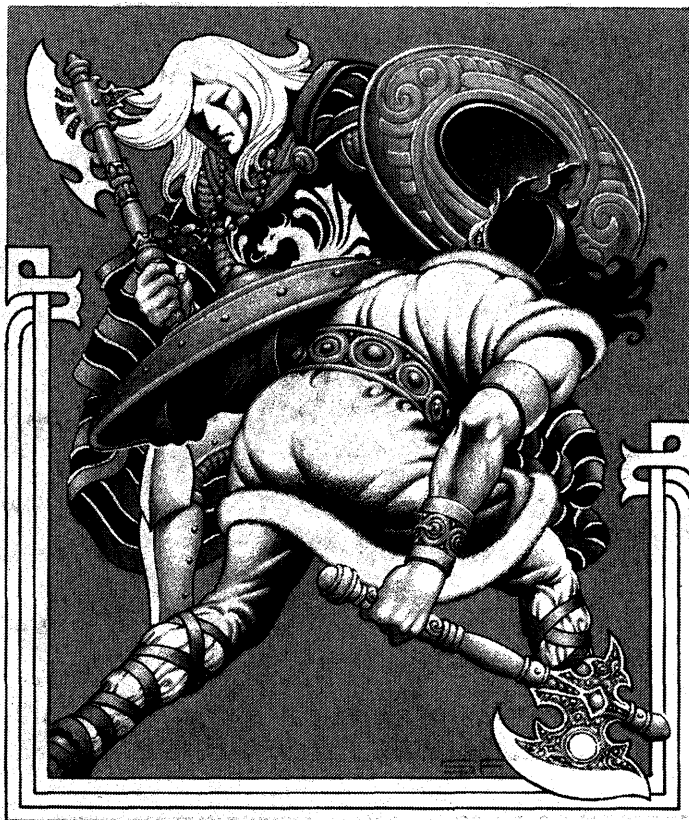
"Then, Olni, hear what I say. You have the right to fight me for this domain, as I fought your father, or one could fight in your name. If someone does this, if he fights me for your sake and loses, then it is you also who have lost. Do you understand? But, if you have sworn to me, then I could say that such a man had no right to challenge in your name, and I would have no need to seek your life. I do not wish to take your life, Cousin."

The old steward, Hakkor, pushed forward and grasped Olni by the shoulders, "Hear him!" he urged the boy. "What he says is the truth. It is protection for you if you swear."

So persuaded, Olni did swear, first among the Lathits to offer allegiance to Aarn Orrisson.

"You know," Joln said later, frowning, "that you have made him your heir?"

"Well, then," Aarn replied casually, "there will be no problem with the succession if I happen to die before I can provide the domain with an heir with a better claim." *And possibly even more Angemani blood*, he added to himself.



But then Taalor faced him. "You never told us, not even when we swore to you. Did you think it would make a difference? We were shield companions, Aarn. We knew you, no matter what your blood, no matter what kind of customs they had across the sea."

Aarn stared into both their faces. Taalor, perhaps, yes; Taalor might not have scorned him. Or Joln either, if he were certain that Aarn could succeed in claiming them a domain. He swallowed hard. "I was a coward. I should have trusted you. I thought, when you heard the truth, that it would be all over."

Joln asked curiously, "What would you have done then?"
"Killed Fenn. That, for sure. Then, I suppose, as many of the rest as I could, before they cut me down."

"But why? Why take the risk if you thought we would desert you once we knew about your birth?"

Aarn shrugged. "I swore an oath."

"And so did we," said the shieldmen, clasping his arms.

Thus came Aarn into the possession of his domain. And thus was the king's line of the Angemani restored to the land, in the Lathit domain to the south of the fog-gray sea.

Ω

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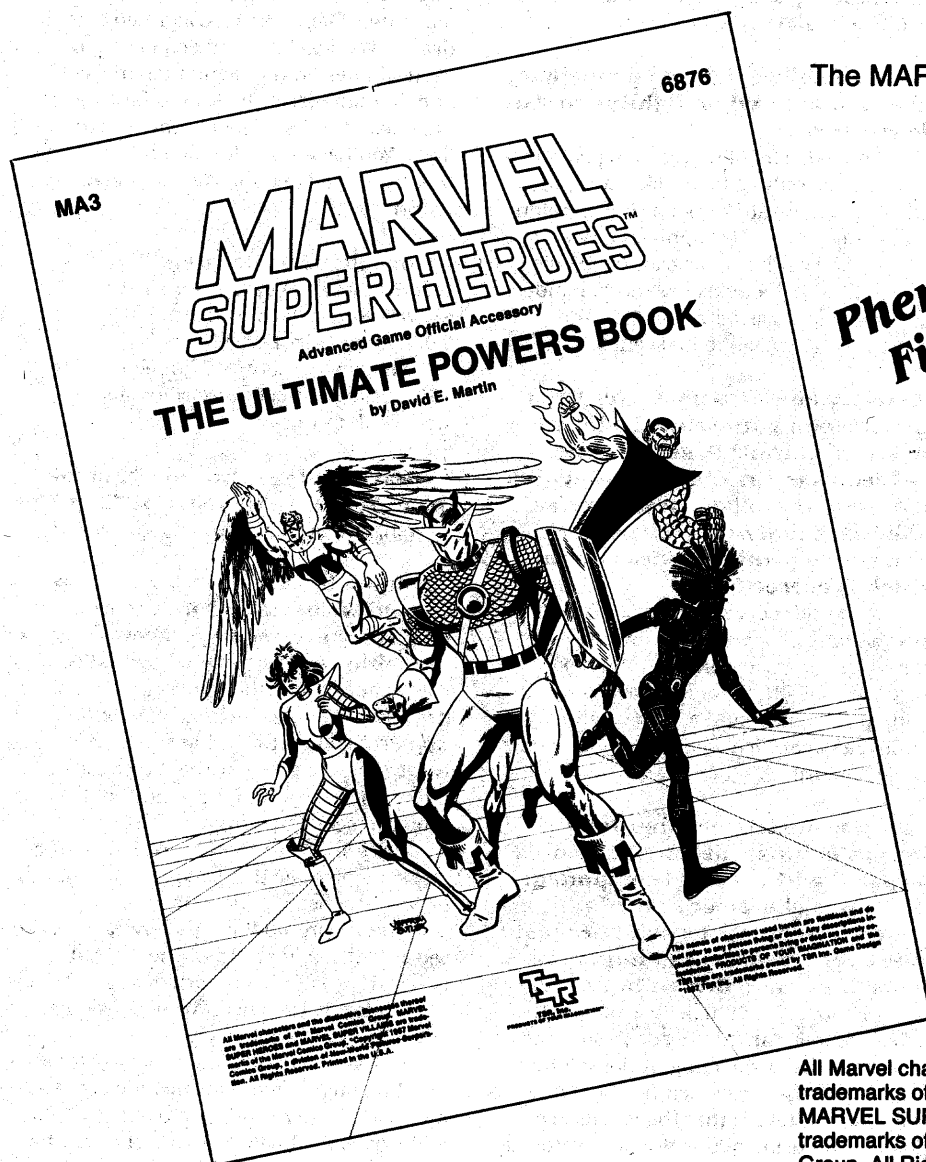
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SAGE ADVICE

by Michael Breault
and Penny Petticord

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Please do not expect a personal reply, as we no longer have the time to make them. However, we will do our best to answer as many questions in this column as possible.

This month's "Sage Advice" column deals with questions about the *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide*, underground adventuring, and *Unearthed Arcana* (again!). Sharpen your red pencils and grab your books!

Dungeoneer's Survival Guide

Say, what's up with the *DSG* proficiencies system? The modifiers for increased skill seem to penalize rather than reward, and the conditions for doing a great job seem to be exactly wrong. What gives?

OK, OK, OK, already! You're right — there is something wrong with the *DSG* nonweapon proficiency system. Our thanks to all the players and DMs who wrote (more or less politely) and informed us of this fact.

The original system was changed during the final playtesting period that took place while the book was being edited. We went through the manuscript and thought we had caught all the places where the text needed to be changed. We missed a couple of simple ones, and this caused a tremendous problem in the system.

The solution is simple. The column on Tables 11 and 13 (pages 25 and 26, respectively) that reads "Die Roll Modifier" should read "Ability Modifier." Also, every place you see "die roll modifier" in the Proficiencies section, change it to "ability modifier." This is what was originally intended, so that adding proficiency slots improves your character's skills. Notice that the proficiencies with negative modifiers are the most difficult to master in this corrected system.

The second change that needs to be made involves the discussions of Proficiency Checks that grant extraordinarily good or bad results (these unusual results come from the Proficiency Check roll itself, not from a separate roll to deter-

mine extraordinary success or failure). The numbers mentioned in those passages should be reversed (i.e., change "1" to "20," "20" to "1," "3 or less" to "18 or greater," etc.). For example, at the top of page 26, it says that a roll of 20 increases the range of the bow or arrow by + 2". This should say that a roll of 1 grants this increase. Similar passages also exist in the weaponsmith and direction-sense proficiencies. And don't forget to change the paragraph on page 23 (right above the "Construction Time" heading) to say that a check of 18 or greater is a failure!

Does the blind-fighting proficiency aid a character when fighting invisible creatures?

Yes, indeed. The blind-fighting proficiency's bonuses (only -2 to attack, damage, and saving rolls, no AC penalty, and retention of special abilities) apply in any situation in which a character cannot see his opponent. This includes darkness, blindness, and all magical effects that render the opponent unable to be seen.

Can any mounted character fire a bow weapon while riding a horse (or other mount)? Page 33 in the *DSG* seems to say that he can, while page 86 in the *Wilderness Survival Guide* says that only a character with riding proficiency can do this. Which is correct?

They're both correct. Page 33 in *DSG* says that any character can fire a bow from a stationary mount. But the next sentence states that only a character with riding proficiency (and a bow weapon proficiency) can fire a bow weapon from a moving mount.

Can a waterfall (or other loud sources of noise) negate the casting of a spell with a verbal component? Also, can a character cast a hold person on a character who has just gone over a waterfall to hold him under water and drown him?

Nope and nope. To negate a spell with a verbal component, one needs to stop the spell-caster from speaking. It doesn't matter whether the target can hear the words — all that matters is that the words are spoken. The tremendous din of a waterfall would not affect a spell that requires a verbal component to cast, but a silence spell or a gag will prevent the spell from being cast. A waterfall does, however, drown out the noise of shriekers and the

singing of harpies (the DM must decide how far from the waterfall one must be before normal hearing is restored).

A *hold person* spell doesn't work that way. It only prevents a person from voluntarily moving, and cannot stop the action of the moving water (and the body's natural buoyancy) from bringing the person to the surface, where he can float (and breathe).

I want to create a map as large and as detailed as the map of Deepearth on pages 76 and 77 of the *DSG*. The blank maps included at the back of the *DSG* use boxes that are too large for mapping at this scale. Is there any way around this?

Doug Niles rolled up into a ball and thought about this one for a while. When he unwound himself, he offered a solution. Take the most suitable map in the back of the *DSG* (probably one of those on page 127) and enlarge it using a photocopy machine. Then, take a straight edge and draw a vertical line between each pair of vertical lines on the blank map (these new lines should bisect the spaces between the old lines). Do the same for the horizontal lines. You have now doubled the number of spaces available for your subterranean world.

How about some guidelines for what constitutes a "shallow descent" and a "steep descent" (Table 29, page 50 in *DSG*)?

A shallow descent is a slope of less than 15°. A steep descent describes slopes steeper than this.

Aren't the *DSG* grappling hooks (page 56) a bit expensive at 76 gp?

Well, maybe. How does 15 gp sound?

Is it my imagination, or is it too easy to smash a boat to bits in underground waterways (according to the tables on page 48 of the *DSG*)?

It's your imagination. First of all, look at page 47. You only roll on Table 25: Collision Probability if the characters can't see where they're going (if they're covering more distance per round than the distance they can see). Carrying a torch lets the boaters see 30', so there's no chance of a collision in water that's moving 30'/round or less. If a beacon (described on page 56) is mounted on the boat, the characters can see 240' directly ahead of them. That keeps them safe from mishap in any but the wildest waters or in waterways that twist and turn a lot.

The above points aside, traveling totally blind through a medium-speed waterway (up to 120' per round) in a passage 20-60' wide gives the boaters a 10% chance of a collision per round if they cower in the bottom of the boat and hope for the best (if a character with boating proficiency steers, this chance drops to 2%). If a colli-

(continued on page 69)

A Hero's Reward

The hero-point system for the AD&D® game

by Leonard Carpenter

In the AD&D® game, players have a lot of control over their characters' actions and performances. A person who plays intelligently and thoroughly understands the game can usually direct the fortunes and progress of his character. But when the character faces his moment of greatest peril, the player is often left at the mercy of the dice. All the clever strategy and heroism in the world can't save a character from a poor saving throw or an unlucky attack roll. The player can only cross his fingers, roll the dice, and hope for the best.

The "hero points" system described here is a way to give the players a little more control over the fate of their characters. Instead of letting the dice totally control a crucial situation, a player may use these hero points to try to affect the dice in the player's favor. In certain circumstances, a player may apply hero points as a bonus to the character's die roll, or may use hero points as a penalty to an opponent's roll.

Hero points are not a free gift for characters — they must be earned. The DM may award hero points to a well-played character who adheres to the aims of class and alignment. A character who faithfully serves a chosen cause as he advances in level is well on the way to becoming a true hero (or anti-hero, as the case may be). The dedicated character may use hero points to attempt the grand, courageous feats for which the great heroes of myth and legend are famous.

A true hero of myth or fiction can often push himself to accomplish some amazing things. The hero, when confronted with a life-or-death situation, draws upon a hidden reserve, spiritual strength, or gutsy determination to attempt a seemingly impossible feat. When facing the most dire and desperate of circumstances, the hero can tap this core of inner strength to surpass his normal abilities, and to overcome any physical or mental limitations.

To simulate this reserve of inner strength, each character is entitled to a

pool of hero points. Hero points are a reflection of a character's willpower, determination, luck, skill, divine favor, devotion to an alignment, and dedication to a cause. Hero points are not just restricted to good guys: the term "hero" is used in a loose sense to refer to any character who fulfills the requirements of his class and alignment. Good guys earn hero points, bad guys earn anti-hero points, and neutral characters earn whatever you want to call them.

The maximum number of hero points in the pool is equal to the character's experience level. Characters with two classes add 1 hero point to their highest experience level, and those with three classes, add 2 points to their highest level. For example, an elven fighter/magic-user/thief (4/4/5) would have a maximum of $5 + 2 = 7$ hero points in her pool. To limit the number of hero points available to very high level characters, some DMs might wish to halt the gain of hero points when the character reaches name level.

A character may expend any or all of his hero points within a 24-hour period (or however long a campaign day is). Once all points are used, the character must wait until the next campaign day to renew the points in the pool. Unused points at the end of the day are simply wasted. Points cannot be hoarded for future use, nor can they be borrowed from the unused points of any previous day.

Hero points are expended to try to affect important die rolls, such as "to hit" rolls, saving throws, or damage rolls. The player must declare the use of any hero points before the roll is attempted. The hero points are then applied as a bonus or penalty to the roll. Once the point use is declared, the hero points are spent regardless of what the die roll result may be. If the character would have made the roll even without the hero point modifier, then the hero points are simply wasted. No more than five hero points may be expended on any given roll.

When a player elects to apply hero points to his own die roll, each hero point translates into a +1 bonus. For instance, if a fighter uses two hero points for an im-

portant "to hit" roll, the fighter gains a +2 bonus to the roll. Through a mighty effort, the fighter may expend four hero points to gain a +4 damage bonus. Hero points may be used to simulate a bold, heroic effort in a variety of situations. A character may spend hero points to gain a better chance to dodge a dragon's fiery breath, to win the initiative in a critical melee round, or to make a difficult archery shot.

Hero points may sometimes be used to impose a penalty to an opponent's die roll, with each hero point acting as a -1 penalty. The player must always give a sound reason why he or she may impose such a penalty. The character must have a clear and obvious influence over the opponent's roll. For instance, a cleric trying to avoid the swing of an ogre's club may, through an intense defensive effort, apply four hero points as a -4 penalty to the ogre's "to hit" roll, or may reduce the ogre's damage roll by 4 hp. A bard who tries to charm a trio of stone giants may spend three hero points to reduce each giant's save vs. spells by -1, by placing greater power into his song.

Hero points may be used to influence certain percentile rolls by translating each hero point into a +5% bonus or -5% penalty. A thief might expend three hero points to gain a +15% bonus to pick a difficult lock. A barbarian might use two points as a +10% bonus to a "bend bars" roll. A paladin might try especially hard to resist a bard's seductive song by using five hero points as a -25% penalty to the bard's "charm percentage" roll. The DM must decide which percentile rolls would conceivably be influenced by a character's heroic gesture, and which are outside a player's control.

Occasionally, a player will suggest using hero points in a manner that is not easily translated into a die-roll modifier. In such an event, the DM must first consider whether the player's request is reasonable. If it is, the DM may then make the effort to determine how to convert the hero points into other units, or into time or distance. The DM should allow a character to gain a reasonable advantage for his point use, but not so great an edge that it

exceeds the advantage granted by a die-roll bonus.

Suppose a thief-acrobat proposes that she be permitted to apply her hero points to make vertical leaps and broad jumps beyond her normal ability. The DM likes the idea, but wants to provide such a point use for all characters. As different character classes use different systems to handle leaps and jumps (Barbarians roll a 1d6 or 1d4, thief-acrobats use percentile rolls), the DM decides to simplify matters by converting hero points directly into units of distance. So, the DM rules that each hero point spent may provide an additional foot of horizontal distance or one-half foot of vertical height.

Later in the campaign, the DM prepares a sea-going adventure. Since a character might need to hold his breath underwater during a deep-sea dive, the DM judges a character may remain underwater for 2-5 segments before being forced to come up for air. A player recommends that a heroic physical effort could enable a character to stay down for a few extra segments. The DM agrees, and decides a character may extend his dive by expending two hero points per additional segment submerged.

Hero points and magic

Hero points in magic reflect a character's mental or spiritual strength and spell-casting mastery. This strength and spell control enables a spellcaster to boost a spell's power in certain limited ways. A magic-user or illusionist may put a little extra "oomph" into a crucial spell through a determined effort of concentration and mental discipline. A cleric or druid may invest his spiritual favor and willpower in a spell to accomplish a truly heroic feat of spell-casting. Hero points mixed with magic can provide some great fun for the players, but only if the DM sets definite guidelines on how a heroic effort may improve a spell's effectiveness.

Magic is perhaps the most flexible and hence the most complex part of the game. So when players apply hero points to their spells, some difficult problems may arise. To keep things from getting too complicated, the DM must enforce strict limitations on what aspects of spells may be influenced by hero points.

Hero points cannot be applied to the duration, area of effect, or range of a spell, nor can hero points alter the number of creatures affected by a spell; it is just too difficult for the DM to translate hero points into every possible unit of time or distance. Spells may range in duration from mere segments to days or even years. The area of effect of one spell may be measured in square feet, while another spell might affect several square miles. Spells may be cast across the breadth of a room or into another dimension. While some spells work on only one target, others may affect a small crowd. With all the many variables involved in spell-casting, the DM must stress simplicity and ease of

use to keep the hero points system from collapsing under the weight of numerous details.

Hero points can only be applied to the simple die rolls of spells, such as damage rolls, saving throws, or common percentile rolls. How hero points are used depends on the given circumstances of a situation. In melee, the most important considerations are the number of targets affected by the spell and the way in which the attacks are delivered.

If hero points are used as a damage bonus to a spell, the hero point bonus is simply added to the damage roll result. If four hero points are applied to a fireball spell that does 22 hp of damage, then the improved fireball inflicts $22 + 4 = 26$ hp damage (or 13 hp of damage if the save vs. spells is made).

If hero points are used as a damage bonus with a spell that produces multiple attacks, then the extra damage should be distributed as evenly as possible. For example, a magic-user applies three hero points to a *magic missile* spell that launches five missiles. To divide the damage bonus evenly, three missiles receive a +1 damage bonus while the remaining two are unaffected. As may be seen, hero points are most effective as a damage bonus when they are applied to an area-of-effect spell with a single damage roll.

Perhaps the most powerful way to employ hero points with offensive spells is to reduce the saving throw of the target creature. For instance, a cleric who is determined to get rid of a pesky demon may spend five hero points on her *dispel evil* spell to force the demon to save vs. spells at -5.

If several creatures are entitled to a saving throw, the hero point penalties must be divided evenly among the targets. If four hero points are applied to a *cone of cold* spell that strikes seven goblins, then four randomly picked goblins each suffer a -1 to his save, leaving three goblins with normal saves. If five hero points are used against the saves of three gnolls, then one gnoll suffers a -1 to his save while the other two suffer a -2 penalty each. Clearly, hero points used to impose a saving throw penalty are most effective when focused upon a single dangerous foe.

Hero points may be applied to spells in a variety of creative ways. A cleric may use his points to restore extra hit points with a curative spell, with each hero point restoring one additional hit point. A druid might use hero points as a penalty to an animal's save vs. an *animal friendship* spell. A magic-user might use her hero points to reduce the likelihood of insanity after casting a *contact other plane* spell. And illusionists will certainly use their points to create particularly effective illusions by reducing a target creature's save vs. disbelief. But again, the player's desires for freedom and creativity must be balanced against the needs of simplicity and easy application of hero points.

As a general rule, hero points cannot be used to improve or increase the spell-like effects of most magic items. Almost all magic items operate independently of the user's experience level or spell-casting ability. Once the triggering phrase is uttered or the spell is read from a scroll, the stored potential within the item is then released as a magic spell or spell-like power, without any need for direct control by the character. Without such control, a character simply cannot apply his magical talent and spell mastery to influence the functions of a magic item. Not even a heroic display of determination and magic proficiency could force a *wand of fire* to throw a more powerful fireball, or increase the damage inflicted by an ice storm spell cast from a scroll.

The DM may, of course, make exceptions for certain extraordinary magic items over which characters have a greater degree of control. For example, a magic-user might be allowed to apply his hero points to a spell that is cast using the stored potential of a *rod of absorption*. A wizard might use his hero points with the bonus spells granted by a *ring of wizardry*; A sorceress might improve her chance of locating a person with her *crystal ball* through a display of intense concentration and resolve. Or a heroic mage, when making a retributive strike with a *staff of power*, might apply five hero points as a +35% bonus to raise his chance of *plane traveling* to 75% and so reduce his chance of instant death to 25%.

As other examples, a bard might apply her hero points to the spells cast by one of the *instruments of the bards*, as the connection between the instrument and the bard's magical and musical talents is such an intimate bond. A *necklace of prayer beads*, which can forge a special link between a cleric and his deity, might have the power of its spells increased by the cleric's spiritual strength and willpower. And if the DM so decides, all spell-casters might use their hero points with the excellent magic-focusing items described in John M. Maxstadt's "Good Stuff, for a Spell" article of DRAGON #111.

In the end, each DM must decide which magic items may be influenced by a character's hero points. Such decisions may be guided by the DM's personal views on how much control characters have over the magic items provided in the campaign.

Hero points and performance

Because hero points are a reward for the well-played character, the number of hero points made available to a character should be tied to the player's performance. The experience level system detailed on page 86 of the DMG provides a good way to monitor a player's performance, using the "E, S, E or P" rating scale. If the player's current performance is Excellent or Superior, then the character is awarded the maximum number of points (e.g., a 7th

level fighter has 7 hero points in his pool). If the player's performance rating is only Fair, then the number of points in the pool is halved. And if the player's performance is Poor, the character loses all hero points. In this way, the number of points in the pool rises or falls as the player's performance improves or declines.

The DM may immediately withdraw any or all of a character's hero points during play if the situation calls for it. Angering one's patron deity, a major alignment violation, or behavior that is grossly out of character for the player's class indicates a sudden fall in the character's performance rating, and so may be punished with the loss of hero points. The player must then improve his performance rating to regain his hero points.

General advice

The hero point system is simple in theory, but often complex in application. The DM will face some tough choices as players continue suggesting new ways to use their hero points. Since this system is so flexible and open-ended, the DM must come up with new rules and guidelines as the campaign progresses. A novice DM should limit hero-point use to those common situations where the effect of hero points is easily understood. The more experienced DM may give players greater freedom to influence the random rolls that rule over every character's fate.

A player must provide a sound reason for any novel use of hero points. The player must establish a direct cause-and-effect relationship between his character's heroic effort and a resulting die roll modifier. Distracting noises, diversionary tactics, annoying cantrips, and other sneaky tricks are not considered heroic gestures and so do not warrant a hero point modifier. Yelling "Look out for the dragon!" in the hope of distracting a distant giant about to hurl a boulder is not a heroic feat that could directly affect the giant's attack

roll. But a mighty leap to evade the incoming boulder would enable a character to use his hero points as a penalty to the giants "to hit" roll.

One very nice benefit of this system is that hero points are firmly linked to a character's performance rating. The DM has an additional tool to influence the players' conduct and so better provide a well-played-and enjoyable adventure. The DM may use hero points to reward the player who respects and upholds his professional alignment and chosen cause, or withhold them to chastise the player whose performance is lacking.

The use of hero points adds greater strategy and forethought to the campaign. A player must pick the best possible moment to apply his hero points, and not squander them on trivial die rolls. Hero points expended at just the right time can mean the difference between certain defeat and a miraculous victory. A smart player will save his hero points until he faces his moment of greatest peril, then spend his points to defeat the fiercest foe or to avoid the deadliest trap. A character who blows all his hero points fighting sewer rats in the morning only to confront a fell vampire at sundown is a poor excuse for a hero.

Players should remember two important things when hero points are introduced into the campaign. First, since all characters are permitted to have a hero point pool, NPCs may also use their points to attempt heroic feats, often at the expense of the players. When the party finds themselves in the middle of a heated battle, an NPC opponent might attempt a daring, unexpected feat to vanquish the players. An NPC foe might simply counter a player's hero points with his own to negate the player's advantage. A really villainous NPC might employ his "anti-hero" points to deliver the *coup de grace* to a wounded or endangered player character. Hero points can be as dangerous to the players as they are beneficial.

Second, since hero points are so useful in getting a character out of a tight spot, the DM may be less inclined to fudge a die

roll to keep an unlucky or foolish player from getting himself killed. The DM will expect the hero to save his own bacon instead of always depending on the DM's mercy.

The hero points system is quite a new idea for the AD&D game, so the DM may wish to take the time to experiment with this system before introducing it in the regular campaign. The guidelines presented here are by no means a complete list of all the ways hero points may be used, but are simply intended as a quick introduction to a very broad and flexible system. The DM will have to add to these guidelines as the players encounter new adventures and dangers. Every unique situation, every new suggestion by the players, will create additional problems for the DM to solve, yet will provide new opportunities for the characters to perform the bigger-than-life feats that are the trademark of all great heroes.

[As an aside, it should be noted that some minor quirks may arise in the use of the hero-points system. For one, calculating and awarding hero points could prove time consuming if performed during the course of play. For ease of play, these functions should be performed after the gaming session, giving the DM time to reflect on the session's events. As an option, the DM may elect to award hero points at the same time experience is calculated, saving time by using the same judgements for both calculations. For another point, the awarding of hero points for every campaign day may slow play considerably; likewise, the overuse of this system may make heroic acts mundane. If this becomes the case, the DM should award hero points once every campaign week, once every experience session, or once every gaming session, depending upon which system works best for the campaign. Restriction and limitation of hero points may be the correct course if hero-point usage becomes the dominant factor of a campaign. After all, how heroic would a superhuman act be if every character could perform such actions once, twice, or several times a day? — RJJ] Ω

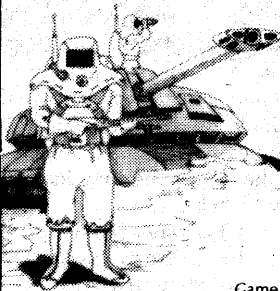
Errata

In DRAGON® issue #116, Spike Y. Jones should have been credited with creating the undine from "The Dragon's Bestiary." In the same article, the weed giant's armor class was incorrectly listed in the table; the text references to armor class were correct. Additionally, the morana has AC 2 while moving and does 3-6 hp damage with a bite; the text references were incorrect. Our thanks to Spike Y. Jones and Anthony Huso for catching these errors.


Several readers (Jeffrey Koga being the first) pointed out that the dates at the bottom of the even-numbered pages were incorrect in issue #117 (January 1987). This was an editorial error, and we're afraid we all missed it.

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Out of the Stone Age

PC Neanderthals in the D&D® game

by Jack R. Patterson

Neanderthals, as described in the Basic D&D® rules, are treated in a superficial manner — just as they are in the AD&D® game *Monster Manual*. Both versions are colored by having to reside in fantasy game universes, and neither is especially authentic. For example, the Basic D&D game notes that Neanderthals have unusually large leaders and keep apes as pets.

However, unlike the treatments given them in other game systems, Neanderthals are basically benevolent in the D&D game, being of Lawful alignment, and they are treated as a demi-human rather than a humanoid race — but Neanderthals lack the range of development that the other demi-humans have. This article offers suggestions for a more detailed treatment of Neanderthals.

Real Neanderthals

The Neanderthals of paleoanthropology were members of a distinct subspecies of *Homo sapiens*. They were inhabitants of Europe, eastern and southern Africa, and much of Asia as far as Java approximately 70,000 to 30,000 years ago. Physical characteristics of Neanderthals included thick, heavy bones, a sloping forehead, and a receding chin under powerful, often protruding jaws. The skull was slung low behind the face, giving Neanderthals the low foreheads and beetling brows seen in many illustrations. They were also heavily built and physically powerful, though slightly shorter than modern humans, with a few minor skeletal modifications which made them proficient in some tool and weapon uses. The brain size of Neanderthals was actually larger than that of modern man. They had a primitive culture — but they were not stupid, and a Nean-

derthal raised in modern society would adapt to it as well as any of us.

Neanderthals had a well-developed speech area of the brain and spoke *something*. However, they may have had trouble with vowels, due to the shape of their throats, so most modern languages would have been beyond their abilities. "Click" group languages from Africa or Sino-Tibetan from Asia would have been easiest for them to learn.

Neanderthals were cave dwellers in western Europe and the Near East, and nomads of the plains in southern Russia. It is believed that they developed woodworking skills which allowed them to make tools, build tents when living away from natural shelter (caves), and prepare skin clothing with the aid of thorns as needles. These folk developed sophisticated spearheads and stone axes, and they are also credited with inventing the knife — a long flint blade.

Neanderthals also had the earliest beginnings of artistic and religious expression. Many of their dead were carefully buried and provided with tools and food, presumably for the afterlife. It is assumed in this article that their way of life resembled that of some modern hunter-gatherers. Because so much of their lives revolved around hunting, animal motifs are commonly found among the remains of these people. Interestingly, there is evidence for a cave-bear cult in many European remains, as cave-bear skulls and bones are often found set about in caves in special, ritualistic positions. Perhaps Neanderthals worshiped cave bears as kindred beings, or admired (at the same time they feared) these creatures' ferocity.

Many Neanderthal remains show signs of violent death, often from massive blows to the skull. It seems likely that, though Neanderthals did not practice war as we

know it, they were quite familiar with violence and fighting, and probably respected physical might among their men. There is some evidence that cannibalism was practiced by some of them as well.

Neanderthals in the game

According to the Basic D&D rules, Neanderthals appear as 2-HD monsters and have Lawful alignments. They are shy, but usually friendly. Being cave dwellers, Neanderthals like both dwarves and (to a lesser extent) gnomes, and usually trade with them, exchanging food from the hunt for manufactured items. The strength and good nature of the dwarves, in particular, make them admired by Neanderthal tribes.

However, Neanderthals hate goblins and kobolds because of their conflicting attitudes. Goblins and kobolds are weak and cowardly, and are prone to attack non-combatants and the helpless — a base action in the eyes of a warrior people who only respect might.

White apes are kept as pets for a number of reasons. First, like most humans, Neanderthals are amused by the antics of primate pets. Second, the apes are vegetarians and pose no threat to the cavemen; the apes accompany Neanderthal females and children while the males hunt. Third, the keen senses and defensive abilities of the apes serve to protect the nonwarriors from foes. In many cases, the apes act as if the humans were members of their own white-ape tribe.

Ogres are hated as competitors in the same (primitive) economic level who desire the same sort of food and lodging, yet have a hostile alignment and prey on the Neanderthals from time to time. With the respect that Neanderthals (like any primitive culture) have for brute force and physical might, ogres rate highly as the most dangerous foes of these people.

Neanderthal leaders are a special type of human, but they are not truly a separate race. When a leader dies, the most powerful tribal cleric selects the most powerful male or female (as appropriate) among the Neanderthals in the area. This person is then fed a special series of herbs and other foods, and the cleric calls upon an unknown force or power (possibly an Immortal spirit). As a result, this person slowly grows in size, strength, and power until he or she becomes in all ways like the leader-types mentioned in the Basic D&D game rules. Because these leaders are solely concerned with their tribe's welfare and rarely go adventuring, they are rarely player characters — unless the Dungeon Master develops a good reason for such to be otherwise.

As a rule, Neanderthals are not familiar with magical items or powerful magic (beyond what tribal clerics can perform). NPC Neanderthals have a -2 penalty to their morale when confronted with powerful magic, though PC Neanderthals may be braver.

PC Neanderthals

Neanderthals, if used as a player-character race/class in the D&D game, have the following statistics:

Strength	10+
Intelligence	normal
Wisdom	normal
Dexterity	normal
Constitution	9+
Charisma	13 (max.)

NPC Neanderthals are treated in all ways as the non-leader types in the Basic D&D game rules. Female Neanderthals have 1 HD and save as 1st-level fighters. Each family band (see below) has one cleric, treated in all ways as a human cleric: 60% of these clerics are 1st level; 30%, 2nd level; 9%, 3rd level; and, 1%, 4th level. Clerics never travel away from their bands, and cannot be player characters.

Warrior Neanderthals wear thick furs to give themselves AC 8; few of them have mastered shields, though there is no reason why they could not use shields and even heavier armor and weapons, if given the training and equipment. Though NPC Neanderthals have a +1 bonus to damage due to their generally great strength, individual PCs will have varying strength bonuses.

Neanderthals, unlike other demi-human races, are not organized into clans. Instead, they are grouped into family bands of 10-40 adults and 4-40 children (1-6 hp each). These are each led by two leaders (as mentioned above) and are formed into large tribes of 3-12 family groups. The bands come together a few times a year to trade, gossip, and so forth, as detailed below. Within each tribe, there are two leaders, male and female, with maximum hit points (for 6 HD), and a cleric of level 4-7. The band with the most powerful leader (in terms of hit points) usually has the most powerful fighters, since the leaders of the less-powerful bands encourage such warriors to join the band of the strongest leader. This band fights with a morale of 8 rather than 7, as it will have more prestige.

Neanderthals can find slanting passages and sense direction underground on a roll of 1-2 on a d6. Also, they can make weapons and tools out of the appropriate types of stone, taking one day of work per device. They generally speak common (though poorly), their own language, and the goblin and dwarven tongues, as well as their alignment tongue. All of them are quite skilled in the basics of wilderness survival, hunting, and plant identification; these talents should be handled by the DM as seen fit.

PC Neanderthals are like human fighters in that their talents are wholly based upon warrior skills. The appropriate tables are given below. It is assumed that PC Neanderthals are known to be exceptionally powerful members of their tribe, and

only the PCs within a tribe will have level advancement (the leaders are assumed to have once been 2-HD Neanderthals who were advanced to 6 HD by special means). Only PC leaders can rise above 6th level; as such, PG Neanderthal leaders automatically gain a 13 charisma (if they did not have it before). Additionally, leaders gain one charisma point per level over the 6th, though this bonus applies only to dealings with other Neanderthals.

Neanderthal Experience Table

XP	Level	Title
0	1	Youth
4,000	2	Hunter
8,000	3	Axe Master
16,000	4	Bear Slayer
32,000	5	Great Bear Slayer
64,000	6	Leader
120,000	7	7th-level Leader
240,000	8	8th-level Leader
480,000	9	9th-level Leader
600,000	10	10th-level Leader
720,000	11	11th-level Leader
840,000	12	12th-level Leader

Neanderthal Saving Throws Table

Level:	1-3	4-8	7-9	10-12
Death Ray or Poison	8	6	4	2
Magic Wands	13	11	9	7
Paralysis or Turn to Stone	12	10	8	6
Dragon Breath	15	13	11	9
Rod/Staff/Spell	16	14	12	10

Hit Dice: Tough, hardy PC Neanderthals gain 1d10 per level, with a maximum of 6d10 at 6th level. Thereafter, they gain +3 hit points per level. This great toughness is balanced by their slow level advancement.

Neanderthals cannot advance beyond 5th level without taking the special ceremonial treatment that makes them leaders. If leader PCs are allowed for whatever reason, they save as human fighters. Because of the ceremony making them into leaders, PC Neanderthal leaders must work to support and protect their tribe and people at all times; selfish adventuring cannot even be considered. All treasure gained by adventuring is brought back to the tribe and distributed as seen fit among the people, so that the tribe as a whole is enriched. Dungeon Masters using the Companion D&D game rules may create information on relics and additional powers; Neanderthal relics, for some reason, are always cave-bear skulls of exceptional size. It is rumored that an Immortal spirit guides the Neanderthals; this spirit is said to resemble a gigantic cave bear.


Daily Neanderthal life

Neanderthals are hunter-gathers, which usually means that the males hunt for meat and the females gather edible plants. While most bands dwell in caves and often

venture deep into dungeons and cavern complexes, they are nomadic and tend to move at regular intervals. They occasionally trade with other peoples, especially exchanging furs, hides, and food for tools, and a young man may work for an outsider for a time as a laborer. If the seasons permit, Neanderthals dwell in tents outdoors, and usually winter over in harsh climates in a cave or dungeon.

Young women frequently marry a member of another band and go to join that band. Sometimes, tensions within the band or an imbalance in the sexes lead a young man or married couple to move to a nearby band. In each of these cases, the band is usually (but not always) within the same tribe.

Once or twice a year, the bands of a tribe get together to renew old acquaintances, arrange marriages, carry on trade, perform religious ceremonies, exchange information, give judgments on difficult tribal problems, and so forth. During these gatherings, the leader types in each tribe form what amounts to a band of their own, deep in the wilderness. After exchanging their own series of rituals and information, the leaders part and return to their own tribes. These leaders are held in awe by other Neanderthals, and their word is law. Leaders speak a variety of tongues, including the Lawful, common, dwarven, goblin, and ogre languages, as well as Neanderthal speech. Ω



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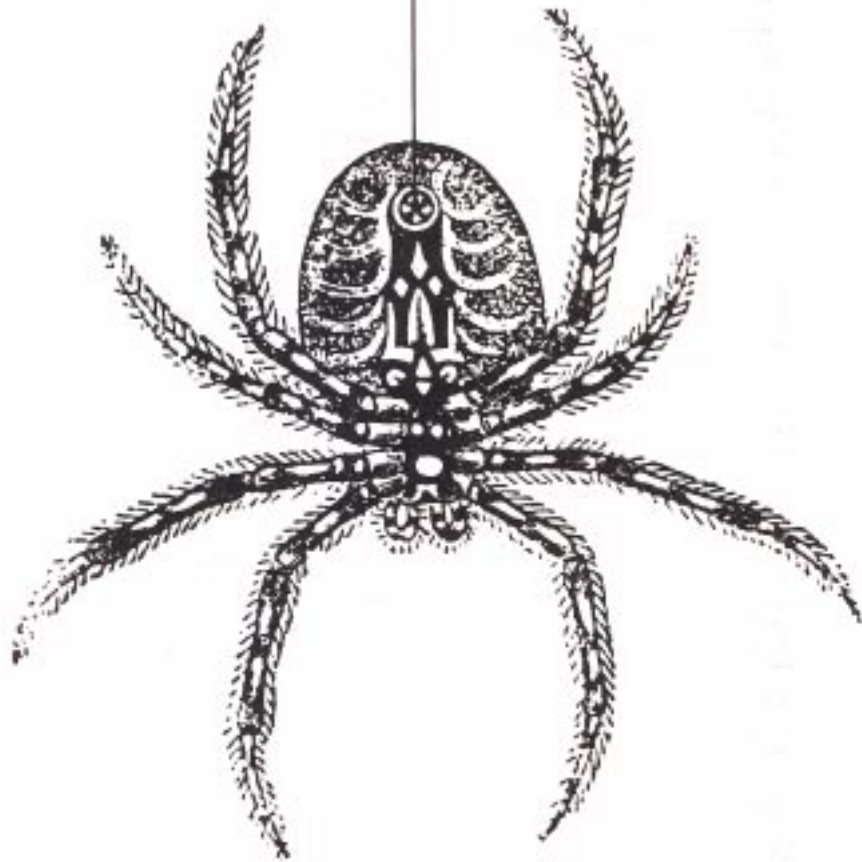
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THE DRAGON'S BESTIARY



This edition of The Dragon's Bestiary presents several of the less pleasant monstrosities inhabiting the dungeons and wilderlands of the AD&D® game worlds: spiders and spiderlike creatures. Our files

show only five new types of these monsters have been noted — which is probably just as well, from an adventurer's point of view. Enjoy.

OPILIONID (Cave Harvestman)

Created by: Ed Greenwood

FREQUENCY: *Uncommon*

NO. APPEARING: 1-20

ARMOR CLASS: 7

MOVE: 18"

HIT DICE: 3+3

% IN LAIR: *Nil*

TREASURE TYPE: *Nil*

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-8

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*

INTELLIGENCE: *Animal*

ALIGNMENT: *Neutral*

SIZE: L (8 legs, each up to 16' in length)

PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*

Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*

LEVEL/XP VALUE: III/110 + 4/hp

Found only in caves, large stone ruins, or subterranean areas, opilionids are spiderlike creatures. Most such species are small, of hand-size or less, and blind, but the giant variety described here has keen (120') infravision and is always hungry, hunting, and aggressive. Cave harvestmen, as their nickname suggests, eat living or decayed plant matter, but they are omnivores and eat carrion or anything they can catch.

Opilionids do not spin webs, but wander ceaselessly in search of food, swarming together if they detect strong prey or an easy meal. Opilionids never fight among themselves (and cannot be coerced into doing so, magically or otherwise), but they calmly eat dead or dying fellows. Cave harvestmen wave their long, sharply jointed legs continually as they move, signaling to their fellows about danger or the presence of a foe or potential prey, and wafting air to their scent glands (opilionids can smell very keenly within a 20' radius).

Opilionids bite for 2-8 hp when they pounce on prey. They customarily leap up to 40', and in combat, dance about continually like acrobatic fencers. Once every 66 turns, one can exude a 30' jet of burning, stinking acid from its underbody, dealing 2-8 hp damage. This acid consumes all cloth or paper in 1-4 rounds (no save for magical items); leather, rope, and wooden items must save vs. acid or be destroyed. A cave harvestman usually jets its acid when physically attacked (but not when attacked by missile fire or unseen opponents). Any one attacker that it chooses is automatically hit but gains a saving throw vs. breath weapons — if successful, suffering only 1-4 hp damage. Any other beings within 10' of the harvestman must also save at +1, or be splashed for 2 hp damage. The chemical creation of this acid causes an unpleasant, sulphurous, rotting smell, which is quite noticeable when groups of these creatures gather, and it is exuded continuously.

Opilionids are immune to all forms of paralysis (including magical spells and carrion-crawler secretions), to the effects of their own acid and that of other opilionids, and to the effects of webs (magical or monstrous), which do not stick to them – although a magical *rope of entanglement*, for example, will catch them.

Cave harvestmen travel far in their lives, mating often. Within 10-40 days after mating, a female lays a cocoon-wrapped cluster of eggs in a relatively inaccessible

area of a cavern, such as the ceiling, and leaves them, with some prey for the infant opilionids to eat, to hatch and grow on their own. Infant opilionids hatch 1-6 weeks after the eggs are laid, and are AC 9, MV 16", have 1+1 HD, and do half damage on all attacks until grown to maturity, which occurs as food permits (typically in six months or so). Infant opilionids always hunt in packs or swarms for mutual protection. Their favored food is carrion-crawler flesh; they are also fond

of dwarven or duergar meals. Harvestmen are usually a mottled, lichenlike grey-green in hue. They appear as giant "daddy longlegs," with impossibly-thin, long legs and small (3' long) egg-shaped central bodies, wrinkled in appearance and studded with many tiny eyes. They have barbed mandibles and wicked, many-toothed mouths. Unlike spiders, their bite is not poisonous.

SPIDER CAT

Created by: K.L. Campbell

FREQUENCY: *Very rare*

NO. APPEARING: 2-12

ARMOR CLASS: -1

MOVE: 24" (includes vertical surfaces)
*26"

HIT DICE: 7+7

% IN LAIR: 80%

TREASURE TYPE: B

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 bite and 2 clawed
forefeet

DAMAGE: 2-12/2-8/2-8

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Web, poison*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Immune to webs, fear, and illusions; +2 or better weapon to hit*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 30%

INTELLIGENCE: *Semi-*

ALIGNMENT: *Chaotic neutral*

SIZE: L (10' long)

PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*

Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*

LEVEL/XP VALUE: VII/1,725 + 10/hp

Spider cats are the creations of a mad wizard, millenia dead. They now roam the Prime Material Plane, eating anything smaller than they are.

Predatory spider cats are able to fire a mass of webbing at likely looking prey within 30'. If a spider cat's webbing hits a target, the victim must roll his *bend bars/lift gates* percentage to break free. A roll is allowed each round that a victim is held, but the strands get harder and tighter each each round, causing a cumulative -10% to the *bend bars* roll until the victim is completely immobile. Once a single spider cat has webbed a target, it drags off its prey in the rigid mass, leaving everyone else alone (including other potential victims or attackers). If such a beast is attacked, however, it defends itself.

If bitten by a spider cat, a victim must save vs. poison at -2 or die. If he makes his save, he takes 25 hp damage from the effects of the spider venom. Anyone slain by the venom is slowly dissolved, from the inside out, as the venom liquefies the once-living tissue. Because of this process, slain adventurers can only be brought back to life with a *wish* spell. The dissolving process is completed within 13-24 rounds,

leaving the victim sealed inside the hardened webbing for the spider cat's later enjoyment (spider cats can easily bite through and consume their own hardened webs).

Spider cats appear to have the thorax and abdomen of a tarantula-like spider, with a feline head, a golden-furred body, and lionlike clawed feet. Large, sharpened

PHOENIX SPIDER

Created by: K.L. Campbell

FREQUENCY: *Very rare*

NO. APPEARING: 1-10

ARMOR CLASS: 7 to 1

MOVE: 12" *24"

HIT DICE: 3-10

% IN LAIR: 95%

TREASURE TYPE: *Nil*

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1 bite

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Poison, web*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 25%

INTELLIGENCE: *Low*

ALIGNMENT: *Chaotic evil*

SIZE: S-L (1-20' across)

PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*

Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*

LEVEL/XP VALUE: *Variable, as per incarnation*

The phoenix spider was created through a mutual effort by the demon queen Lolth and an unknown powerful being from the Elemental Plane of Fire. These creatures now serve both lordlings.

The phoenix spider appears to be a small crimson spider like a black widow, with a black hourglass on the top of the abdomen. They are vicious and attack anything not spider- or flame-like in nature. They can be killed by normal means and take double damage from cold attacks and temperatures. Fire-based attacks of sufficient power (doing damage greater than or equal to their current hit-point totals) will seem to kill them. However, such attacks actually strengthen these creatures, causing them to reform in three rounds. If slain by other means, it takes nine rounds for these monsters to reform their essences into a more powerful creature.

mandibles appear in place of a regular mouth. These monsters tend to lair in prides which attack all living creatures, though they strictly avoid undead (apparently hating the smell). They collect treasure by accident, though their ravages usually ensure that the remains of many victims and their belongings will be found in their cavern lairs.

Only being killed by cold-based spells prevents these beasts from reforming again.

Form	#	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Size		1'	2'	4'	8'	12'	16'	20'
AC		7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Hit dice		3	4	5	6	7	8	10
Bite damage	1	1-3	1-4	1-6	1-8	1-10	1-12	
Poison damage	4	5	6	10	12	16	20	

The poison, which is injected with each bite, kills if a save vs. poison is missed; the damage listed is taken for a successful saving throw. In addition, a phoenix spider is able to fire a strand of webbing across a distance five times as far as the spider's size (i.e., a phoenix spider in its first form can fire a web only 5' distant, but a seventh-form spider could fire a web up to 100'). One creature may be the victim of such a web-shot, and must save vs. spells as per the magic-user spell *web*, or else suffer all the usual effects of the spell itself. Note that the webs of the phoenix spider are *not* flammable.

If a spider has reached its seventh transformation (20') and it is slain by fire, it reverses its growth process, shrinking one size lower with each death. Any other method of killing it after its seventh life will permanently kill it.

Phoenix spiders are found in various places in the Abyss, and some have been summoned through special rituals by evil drow and human cults. Because they like hot temperatures, these monsters are extremely rare and almost never found away from the place where they were summoned (which is usually kept warm).

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POLAR SPIDER

Created by: Jeff MacArthur

FREQUENCY: *Very rare*
NO. APPEARING: 1 (5% chance of 2-5)
ARMOR CLASS: 3
MOVE: 16"
HIT DICE: 6 + 6
% IN LAIR: 50%
TREASURE TYPE: J-M, Q
NO. OF ATTACK: 1 bite
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 4-10
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*
INTELLIGENCE: *Low (see below)*
ALIGNMENT: *Neutral*
SIZE: *L (see below)*
PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*
Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*
LEVEL/XP VALUE: VI/650 + 8/hp

These enormous arachnids inhabit only the coldest and most remote snow-bound regions. They build no webs, but roam in search of anything edible. The great polar spider usually hunts alone, but sometimes

travels in a small pack in order to bring down creatures as formidable as frost giants, white dragons, winter wolves, and yeti.

When it comes to combat and hunting techniques, the polar spider is exceptionally clever. The spider usually hides in a deep snowbank where it is 75% undetectable due to coloration, stillness, and experience, and rushes at passing prey, surprising on a 1-4 on a d6. This spider's bite is fatally poisonous, and all saves vs. poison are at -2 against it.

The monster is completely immune to cold-based attacks. Its favorite prey are humans and frost giants. A polar spider's lair is usually in an icy cavern or a large tunnel in the snow, and here will be found the spider's treasure (purely incidental). The creature appears to be an enormous, heavy-set spider covered by long, shaggy white fur. Its many compound eyes are dull blue, and its curved fangs are ivory white in hue. These monsters are usually 6' high along their backs, and cover a rough circle 8-10' in diameter when standing.

BOLAS SPIDER, Giant

Created by: Jeff MacArthur

FREQUENCY: *Uncommon*
NO. APPEARING: 1-4
ARMOR CLASS: 4
MOVE: 9"
HIT DICE: 5 + 5
% IN LAIR: 65%
TREASURE TYPE: 1-4 magical items, 40%
(plus incidental monies and equipment)
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 bite
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-8
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*
INTELLIGENCE: *Low*
ALIGNMENT: *Neutral evil*
SIZE: *L*
PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*
Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*
LEVEL/XP VALUE: V/350 + 6/hp

The giant bolas spider is a strange and dangerous creature which has lost all web-making ability and now captures prey with a sticky globule attached to a tough silk line. The spider twirls the weighted line rapidly above its head using one of its powerful legs, while it judges the distance of the intended quarry. With a mighty flick, the spider releases the filament, which feeds out of the creatures' abdominal spinnerets to the length required by the distance of the target. The maximum range of this silk filament is about 240', and the spider throws it with such speed and accuracy that it receives a +3 bonus to hit, with no range modifiers. Once struck, the victim becomes stuck fast to the filament.

The bolas spider then braces itself and hauls in the catch, which can weigh up to 5,000 gp weight, at the rate of 60' per round. Anyone resisting this pull in any manner will find that the spider may well walk toward its prey at the same rate of speed, slowly winding up the cord with one skilled foreleg. The cord is so tough and elastic that it can only be cut if at least 10 hp damage are done to it in a single stroke from a magical edged weapon (the cord is AC 4). Only creatures with giant strength may snap the cord by physical force, such an effort taking 1-4 rounds. A bolas spider has enough sense to determine if a creature is too huge to be pulled in by its globby bolas, and they are not overly fearless or foolhardy. If necessary, the spider can cut its own cord and leave. When a creature is hauled in by the arachnid, the spider then administers its deadly bite (save vs. poison or die).

These monsters lair in huge, sturdy treetops overlooking a well-used road or path, or in the upper floors of an abandoned tower or building. There are reported incidents of these vile spiders taking up residence in spacious barn haylofts. The farmers owning these buildings have lost livestock, farm hands, and family members due to the voracious habits of this spider. A bolas spider's lair is always cluttered with bones, husks, and the non-magical equipment of past victims. The spider wraps magical treasure up in silk bundles to hide it; for some reason, these creature can *detect magic* by touch, and are attracted to magical items (though they have no use for them and may not even be aware of their value).

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THE GAME WIZARDS

Who dies?

by David "Zeb" Cook

In this month's installment of "The Game. Lizards," we talk about the fate of your favorite character class. Pay attention! Don't fall asleep; otherwise, it might be too late to change things! Right now, I'm asking to hear from you — your opinions are important!

As I sat at my computer terminal this morning, having enjoyed a fine Christmas vacation, I found myself faced by what once looked like a simple problem. As the chief (but not the only!) guide; designer, and architect of the second-edition AD&D® game revision, I am the person who has to make the basic decisions that will affect the game. The decision that confronted me this morning has turned into a swamp, a morass, a dismal quagmire. The question is this: What player characters should be included in the revised *Players Handbook*?

Instantly! the first answer is All Of Them. Of course, it's simple. Include all the player-character classes that have appeared in the previous hard-cover books. That way, everybody can play their favorite character class, and everybody wins! If only it were that simple.

Bluntly, the first problems are economics and space. There are a limited number of pages that can go into the revised *Players Handbook*. In the current *Players Handbook* and *Unearthed Arcana* are approximately 100 pages devoted to descriptions of races, classes, and basic spells. This does not include the 44 pages of additional spells in *Unearthed Arcana* or the 59 pages of similar material found in *Oriental Adventures*. Putting all this together would make for about 200 pages devoted to characters and classes. Left out of this, count are pages on character creation, equipment, money, alignment, movement, and languages. Nor does it include rules which are now in the *Dungeon Masters Guide* but which really belong in the *Players Handbook*, such as how your character fights, heals, moves, trains, researches, or pays for his expenses — i.e., everything you need to know to play your character.

Then, there are new rules that I want to include, and proficiencies are a big addi-

tion to the rules. This last part is important. The revised edition is going to have more than glossed-over old material. The new proficiency system, an outgrowth of *Oriental Adventures* and the two *Survival Guides*, will give you more choices in the growth and development of your character. It is also going to take up a lot of space. There is not enough room for everything. Something must go away.

Okay, since not everything can appear in the revised, *Players Handbook*, what could be thrown away? First is the material found in *Oriental Adventures*, which is specifically for an Eastern campaign. To do these classes justice would also mean that everything in *Oriental Adventures* all other topics would have to be included, too — and not everyone wants to play in an Oriental campaign. So, Oriental characters and classes will stay in *Oriental Adventures*.

This still leaves about 150 pages of material that could be included. Is this still too much material? I think so, but I don't know for sure. It's time to look at all the other player-character classes, weighing their pros and cons. Now, just because something's written here doesn't mean I absolutely plan to keep, cut, or change a given class. Instead, you get to see how I'm thinking and, if you want, you can respond to my comments. This could become real interesting!

The Big Four (Three?)

The "big four" character classes are the more-or-less traditional-ones — fighter, cleric, magic-user, and thief. They have a lot of pros and not too many cons . . . maybe.

The fighter is a simple character A fast to learn and not too complicated to play. He is admittedly not always the most exciting character, and some players even find him boring to run. In fact, the boredom, factor may be a problem. But taking him out would really change the balance-of the game, too! I think the fighter is going to stay.

The cleric suffers from a number of complaints about his spells and his power, and my boss has even recommended getting rid of him. After all, no one ever plays a cleric correctly. Clerics do unknown things to worship faceless gods. You don't see them preaching, converting, providing moral guidance, or anything that a real cleric does. They are walking first-aid kits and combat medics. How many of you have called "Medic!" when your character

was hurt? If there were another way to heal player characters, clerics could be done away with in the core rules. Later, a complete book could be devoted to them, giving them the detail and treatment they need. Neat idea; huh?

At best, the cleric could use some fixing. I am strongly against the suggestion of beefing up his spell choices. The result would only be a magic-user in different clothes! Instead, the idea of tailoring your cleric to fit a particular campaign or my thos could be used. This would mean broader rules about weapons allowed (and not allowed), armor used, spells allowed, and proper behaviors. If we did this, you actually could tell the difference between a cleric of Thor and a cleric of What's-His-Name.

The magic-user. A lynch mob will come after me if I kill the magic -user. I don't think I need to say any more about that!

Like the cleric, the thief suffers from a number of small complaints, but few have demanded the death of the class. The thief is underpowered — but, of course he's a weak fighter! He's a thief! He steals from everyone and ruins friendships; this is more a problem of how the player is using the thief, not the class itself. He dies too easily; this should encourage him to be sneaky. He advances in level too quickly; that's because he dies so easily. Like clerics, thieves are likely to have small changes made to give the player more choices and subtle advantages; chief of these may be moving all his thieving abilities to the proficiency system.

The swamp of subclasses

After The Big Four (or Three), the issue of keeping or killing character classes becomes a lot more confused. Let's start with the easy ones.

The assassin is a goner — virtually guaranteed. It is highly unlikely that any amount of appeal will save his neck. He is disruptive to party harmony and, more importantly, presents the wrong image about AD&D games. If you really like assassin characters, I'm sorry, but you can still use the first-edition character class.

The monk was heavily revised in *Oriental Adventures*. This is where he properly belongs and is where he will stay. He is not really dead, but he is not going to be in the core rules.

The bard just doesn't work. Too many confused rules and special exceptions were created just to make the bard fly. Some of his powers were seriously unbalancing and dumb (in my personal opinion). Finally, the way he is described, the bard really belongs only in a Western European setting. Whoever heard of an Amerind bard with a magical harp or a Polynesian harpist bard? (I'm sure I'll hear from someone.) Thus, the bard as he currently exists will die. But is he gone? I don't know for sure. It seems like a good idea to heavily redesign the bard to fit with the rules and increase his playability. If this happened, it

would probably mean a character class that specialized in communication and dealing with people. We'll see what happens.

The barbarian, cavalier, paladin, and ranger all present special problems. Many people have complained that the barbarian and cavalier are unbalanced, unplayable, and unnecessary. Others have claimed they are great and marvelous. I agree with the first group, and my inclination is to not include them in the core rules, saving them instead for a special book devoted entirely to fighters. There, we can give them bigger and better treatment. The paladin (whom I confess I enjoy) is a strong character and is likely to remain. A good role-playing game needs a good, strong role model, and there is none better than the paladin, the ultimate hero. Better definitions will be given, showing what a playing a paladin truly means and how he can work with a group. Finally, the ranger is a big question mark. Like the paladin, he is a strong archetype — the valiant woodsman. This makes me want to keep him. However, many of his powers are learned skills. With a proficiency system that lets your character learn skills,

you may be able to take a normal fighter and give him the tracking and woodsman skills of the ranger. The end result would still be a ranger, but you wouldn't need a separate class. Of course, the proficiency system will probably be an optional feature of the game, so the ranger would be as good as dead for some.

The illusionist is little more than a magic-user with different spells. He could be dropped and his spells combined with the magic-user list. Or, he could become an example of a school of magic, magic-users who specialize in illusions and trickery. I lean strongly toward this idea, especially since schools of magic presents a lot of other possibilities — enchanters, conjurers, savants, etc. Think of the can of worms this would open! It would be great!

With a strong proficiency system, the thief-acrobat can still exist, though not as a separate character class. He would be essentially a thief with lots of acrobatic proficiencies. The end result is no different.

Finally, there is the druid. You notice I saved this for last. Of all the sub-classes, this presents the hardest decision. Some feel he is too weak and limited only to

wilderness adventures. Like the bard, he is a Western European character type (ever hear of an Arabic druid?). Finally, at his core, he is only a cleric following a particular mythos. These are the cons. In his favor, he inspires an intense loyalty in some players and, when cleverly played, is powerful and amusing. Finally, his abilities are very different from a normal cleric. Ideally, it would be nice if he could be worked into the clerical class, an example of the differences between clerics of various mythos. This might be done, although it seems like a difficult task. He could be held out of the core rules and saved for a later product. Or, he might remain unchanged. The jury is still out on the druid.

The materials presented here are only ideas and suggestions at this point. Some of these are almost certain to occur; others are still very much up in the air. Hopefully, I've stimulated some reactions! If you've got something to say about the character classes or a character class I've left out, you better write and say so now. To get what you want, you've got to tell me what you want! There are no guarantees, but if you don't write, don't blame me! (This project is going to be a lot of fun!) **Ω**

SAGE ADVICE

(continued from page 58)

sion is indicated, the chance of damage is only 5% for every 30' per round the boat is moving. You roll 1d100. If the result is less than the chance of damage, the boat receives damage equal the damage chance minus the d100 roll result, multiplied by 1% of the boat's hull strength (Table 26: Boat Damage gives a qualitative result in terms of how badly the boat leaks).

To sum up, taking a few simple precautions (having a character on board who can handle a boat, bringing a light source, backing the oars if the water is moving too fast, etc.) gives a good chance that the boat reaches its destination with only a few dents. If anything, the system seems to be too lenient considering that travel occurs in confined quarters, with no natural light, and in usually rough, fast, and unknown waters.

Unearthed Arcana

Our campaign includes an old-style paladin with a long history. With the change from fighter sub-class to cavalier sub-class, we have been arguing over what changes must be made in this character's statistics and background. The character doesn't have the minimum requirements for the cavalier class. Do we have to raise his ability scores so he can fit into the class?

Also, the new code of chivalry would change the character drastically. Do we have to assume that the old teachings were part of his background this whole time?

Bringing existing characters into line with new rules is always difficult, but the degree to which this change is mandatory in a given campaign is a matter for the DM and player to decide together. If the DM wants to include the full gamut of new rules in the campaign and wants the characters to conform, the player and DM can discuss the best method of working it out. It is not mandatory that the character change at all; your campaign is your own game, and it can be run as you please.

[There are a few lawful-neutral dwarven paladins running around in certain long-term AD&D® and D&D® game campaigns because of a poorly explained rule in the old Supplement 1, Greyhawk, for the original boxed D&D® game set — RM].

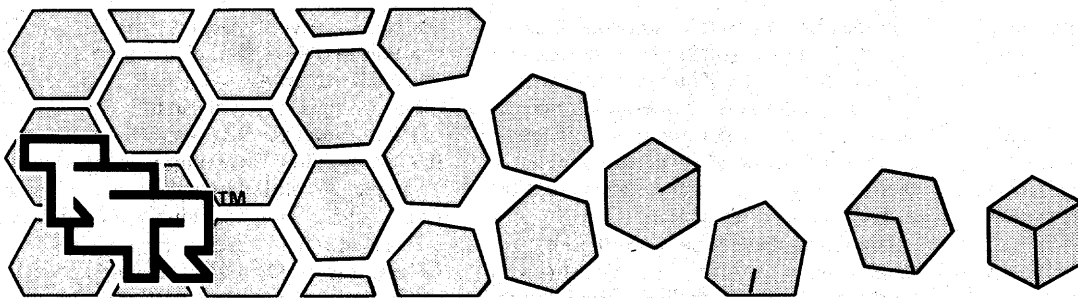
There are several methods of handling minimum ability score requirements. First of all, though a character must meet the minimum requirements to start out in the class, the character will not lose powers or the ability to progress in the class if those scores are later lowered by some means, such as magic, aging, etc. Therefore, one option is to assume that the character had the requisite scores at the beginning of his career, but they were later reduced to their present status. This process can be rationalized as much or as little as you wish. Or, the DM can rule that the requirements for becoming a paladin in this campaign world were not as strict when the character in question started, but that due to competition the requirements were increased at some later time. That way,

the existing character can stay as it is, but new ones would have to conform to the new rules. However, the old character would still be eligible to begin gaining the benefits of the cavalier class at this point due to his status within the campaign world. The cavalier's ability to raise scores through experience can also come in handy; you could make it retroactive if that would help bring the character into line.

As for background, the chivalric code may or may not fit in with your campaign world. If it does not, I would recommend not using the cavalier class at all. If it does, the paladin character should abide by it. But use good sense; paladins behave in a lawful and good fashion, and do not scorn lowly folk in need.

Why can't a dwarf pummel a human using Weaponless Combat System I (page 106, Unearthed Arcana)? Likewise, why can't a dwarf grapple a human or overbear that same person?

System I is the streamlined, simplified method, and it does not allow short characters to pummel larger opponents at all. The reason is simple — the system was designed to be quick and easy. If you want more detail, use System II. In that system, any creature can pummel any prone opponent. Overbearing attacks can be used by a smaller attacker to bring down a larger opponent. So, your dwarf has to knock his human opponent down first, then he can pummel and grapple.



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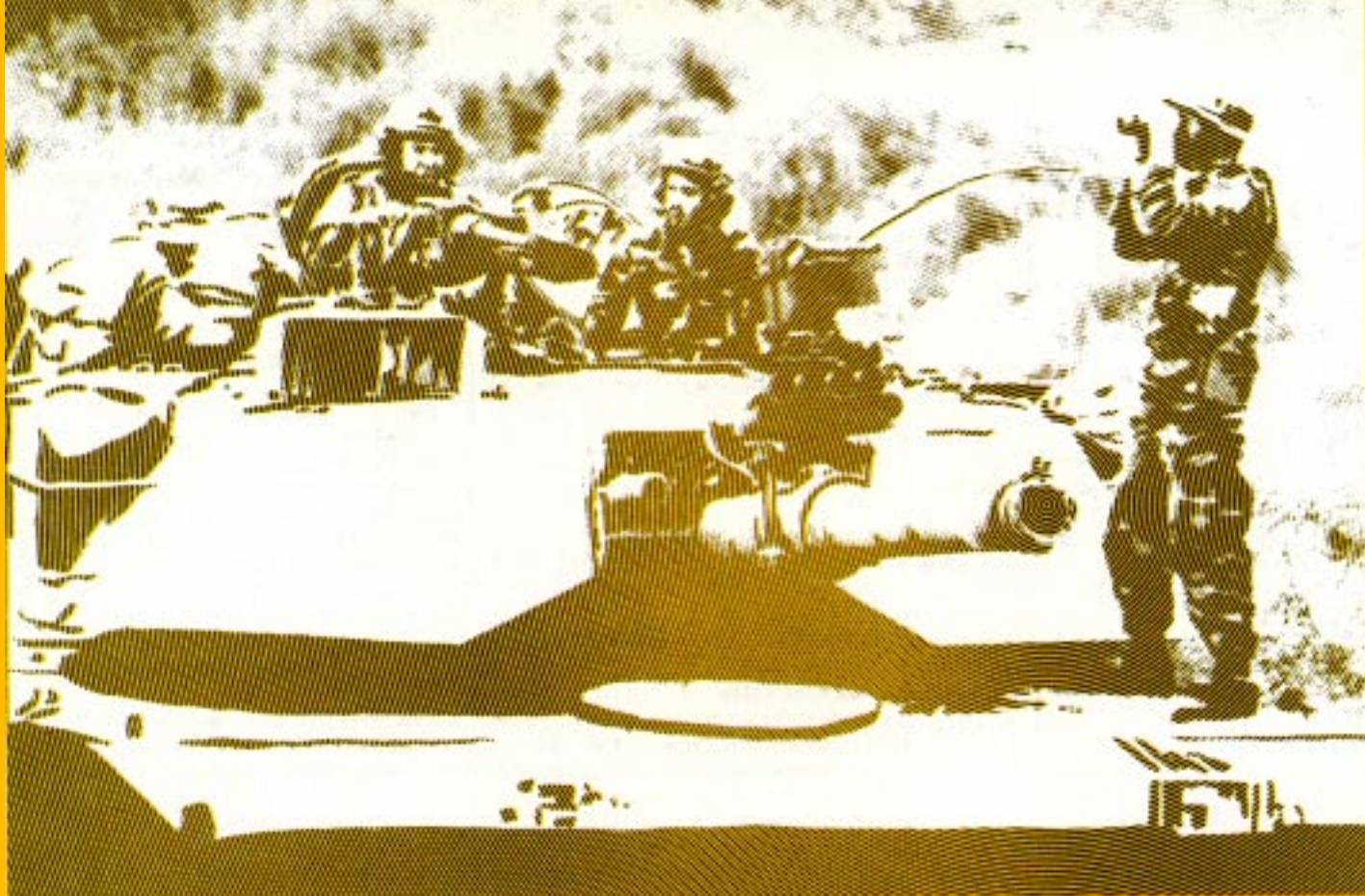
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P R E V I E W S



TOP SECRET®
GAME

Unfriendly Fire

War, revolution, and secret agents

by Thomas M. Kane

A machine-gun bullet burst through the office window, showering the room with a spray of crystal. Both agents ducked but kept snatching papers from the office's ruins. They were all too aware of the fighting just outside.

"Let's hurry it up!" Jed shouted, throwing a folder into his briefcase and snapping it shut. "You got everything?"

"Yeah, just in time. One more day and the guerrillas would have had these." Sandra snatched one last paper from the file cabinet, dropped it, and grabbed at it

again. "Let's hit the road for the airport!"

Fleeing the office, the two agents ran for the stairwell and hurried down to the main lobby. The large picture windows were now completely shot out. Bullets howled across the street. The remaining government troops had set up a barricade an hour ago, but it was now clearly being overrun. There was an obscene tinkle as shrapnel burst through a car's windshield. In the distance, the two could hear men screaming.

Jed took a deep breath to settle his

nerves, then drew his handgun. It seemed ridiculously small now in the face of the murderous fighting outside. He looked at Sandra, who clutched her own revolver with a trembling hand, and she looked back, her face completely white.

"It was good working with you," Jed said, trying to smile.

Sandra laughed weakly "Yeah, really. Let's do it."

Jed nodded. Then they plunged into the street, hoping for the best. . . .

At an exciting time like this, you don't want to roll for 500 shots, injury locations, and damage figures. We know that the TOP SECRET® game is not a military game, but espionage and war are closely linked. Agents have been known to draw fire while uncovering military secrets. Engineering coups, infiltrating armies, or botching international jobs can inject the armed forces into an adventure with ease. Terrorists often trade in military weapons, and agents might unexpectedly find themselves in a war zone at any time.

This article attempts to fill in these missing "war rules." It is not an elaborate military simulation, but it works well enough for general use. The outcome of a fight and the fate of a given individual can be computed without altering the game significantly.

Victory and defeat

The Administrator may wish to decide the results of mass battles in advance, since missions will be drastically altered depending on which political power controls the job site. Furthermore, mass battles are so large that an individual fighter makes little difference. Agents may provoke or prevent wars, and they may even arrange for one side to win — but, in actual fighting, they have little effect. This system resolves mass battles, but it is not random; the Administrator may determine the results ahead of time. The effect on individual participants is the major variable feature. These rules explain what percent of a force will be lost and assign a chance that any individual player character will be injured.

Time in mass battles is computed in periods of one hour each. Each side's forces are listed by unit type, which may be of any size, since damage is computed by the percentage of the *original* force lost. Artillery, aircraft, ships, and ground troops should be divided into different units. A unit cannot cause damage to anything beyond the range of its weapons. Unarmed fighters must be immediately adjacent to their opponents; troops with guns may be 700' away, and artillery has even longer ranges. The ranges of various cannon and rockets are described elsewhere in this article.

Obviously, mobility is important. The speed of a unit is the same as that of its slowest member. On Table 1, "flat" indicates a road, desert, or plain. "Rough" can be used for light forests, rocky areas, and hills. Swamps, mountains, jungles, and the like are "very rough." "Other" indicates deep water for ships and the sky for aircraft.

To determine the percent casualties a unit can inflict, find the number of attackers in it. (Usually, this equals the number of troops; however, in an artillery unit, it is the number of guns fired, and in bombing strikes, the number of bombs dropped is what is important.) Multiply this number by the factor given in Table 2.

Table 1

Troop Movement Table (in miles/hour and feet/turn)

Unit type	Terrain							
	Flat		Rough		Very rough		Other	
	MPH	FPT	MPH	FPT	MPH	FPT	MPH	FPT
Infantry	3	25	2	12	½	6	—	—
Motorized	65	480	32	240	—	—	—	—
Armor	35	276	—	—	—	—	—	—
Helicopter	—	—	—	—	—	—	185	1,378
Scout plane	—	—	—	—	—	—	190	1,390
Jet fighter	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,500	11,100
Jet bomber	—	—	—	—	—	—	750	5,550
Submarine, underwater	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	148
Submarine, surfaced	—	—	—	—	—	—	25	185
Large ship	—	—	—	—	—	—	84	626
Medium ship	—	—	—	—	—	—	70	512
Small ship	—	—	—	—	—	—	55	400

This accounts for any difference in weapons technology. Next, divide the attackers' score by the total number of troops on both sides. Multiply this by 100% and round it off to a convenient number. A calculator may be helpful with this. Fortification reduces the percentage of casualties (see Table 3). The attackers reduce the enemy by the given percentage each exchange. The number slain is a percent of the *original* force's numbers. If 50% damage is inflicted for two exchanges, the enemy force is destroyed. Not all casualties are actually killed, but they are no longer able to fight in any case. See the sample battle on page 74 for details.

Table 2

Comparative Weapons Table

Defender	Attacker					
	A	B	C	D	E	F
A	1	2	3	4	5	6
B	0.8	1	2	3	4	5
C	0.6	0.8	1	2	3	4
D	0.4	0.6	0.8	1	2	3
E	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	1	2
F	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.8	1

A. Unarmed.

B. Hand-to-hand weapons and some pistols.

C. Heavy arms. Firearms are common; grenades and machine guns are likely to be present.

D. Military. This sort of force has access to the infantry weapons described in this article and the TOP SECRET Companion. The most effective small arms possible are present. Helicopters and small boats are included in this factor.

E. Artillery. This covers cannon fire, aerial bombing, and the like. Note that a spotter must be in the target area for indirect cannon fire. Tanks and most military airplanes and ships are covered here.

F. This covers most modern weapons of mass destruction. Napalm, the rapid-firing guns of the C-47 aircraft, and compressed-

fuels bombs are of this sort. Nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons have specialized effects and are not covered here. If they show up in a mass battle, take note of what areas are devastated and eliminate troops within them as appropriate. [See "Agents and A-bombs" and "After the blast," DRAGON® issue #108, for information on nuclear weapons and materials. — RMJ] CBW devices are covered on pages 75-76 of this issue.

Table 3

Fortification Table

Protection	Casualty reduction
Trees	-10 %
Hills/earthworks	-10 %
Thin wood/plaster	-15 %
Wooden beams	-35 %
Sandbags	-40 %
Concrete/stone	-45 %
Underground	-95 %
Trench	-50 %
Vehicles	-30 %
Armored vehicles	-50 %
Flak jackets	-10 %
Bulletproof armor	-20 %
Steel plate	-40 %
Barbed wire	-5 %
Minefield*	-25 %
Moat	-30 %

* This figure is added to the casualties inflicted on the attacker as well as subtracted from the casualties received by the defender. Mantraps, pungee stakes, etc., may be treated as minefields.

Moats, minefields, and barbed wire have no effect on artillery. If an attacker moves through or around defenses, they are no longer useful. Explosives can destroy some fortifications. If a force with type D or better weapons wishes, it may attack the foe's defenses. Calculate the percent casualties normally, but subtract it from the protection of a given fortification. Thus,

inflicting 45% casualties on sandbags destroys them. Geographical features (like hills) and personal protection (like flak jackets) may not be destroyed in this manner. An individual combatant may use any fortification on the list to reduce his chance of being wounded, although this does not alter the battle as a whole.

For every hour of battle, each player character must roll 1d100. If the result is lower than the percentage of casualties the enemy inflicts, the agent is a victim of the fighting. Consult Table 4. Fortifications reduce the chance of an agent being hurt.

Table 4
Casualty Table

Die roll (d10)	Weapons used by attacker		
	A-B	C-D	E-P
1	A1	A1	A1
2	A1	A1	A1
3	B1	A1	A1
4	B1	A1	A1
5	B1	A1	B1
6	F1	B1	C1
7	G1	C1	D1
8	G1	D1	D1
9	G1	F1	E1
10	G1	G1	F1

A1. Bullet wound. Consult the normal tables for Projectile Weapon Combat.

B1. The agent is taken prisoner, an event which may be played out in full. A roll of an agent's Evasion score or below on 1d100 allows a prisoner to escape during the battle. Otherwise, the agent is sent to a POW camp behind enemy lines.

C1. The agent takes 1 point damage from an explosion.

D1. The agent takes 1-10 points damage from an explosion.

E1. The agent takes 3-30 points damage from an explosion.

F1. The agent is forced to flee 100-10,000 yards from the battlefield.

G1. The agent is rendered unconscious by hand-to-hand combat.

Sample battle

Agent Eustace Fairchild is trying to kidnap the mysterious terrorist leader "Akeem." He hopes to abduct Akeem in the chaos of battle, when the terrorist won't be missed. Eustace is disguised as a mercenary in Akeem's private army at the time that Akeem is attacking another warlord in the Lebanese desert beneath some rocky hills. Akeem's unit has 500 troops; his opponent has only 250. Both are armed with military weapons; multiplying their effect by one means no adjustment. Thus, Akeem's troops destroy 67% of the enemy each exchange ($500/750 \times 100\%$). The enemy troops wear flak jackets, so this damage is reduced to 57%. However, Akeem's troops lose 33% of their number ($250/750 \times 100\%$). Eustace rolls an 80 on

16100, evading injury in the first hour of fighting.

In the second hour, enemy artillery in the hills opens up. There are 25 guns; this is multiplied by two, since Akeem has only military weapons. The guns inflict 10% casualties on Akeem's force ($50/500 \times 100\%$ — the gun crews don't count, as they are out of Akeem's range). Akeem's troops blast another 57% of the enemy troops, destroying them. Akeem also loses 43% more of his own forces. Of these, 10% were eliminated by artillery; the other 33% were lost fighting with foot soldiers. Eustace has a 43% chance of being injured; he rolls a 44%, narrowly escaping harm. Akeem's men then retreat to escape the guns. They lose 10% of their original number each exchange until they leave the gun's range. If they do not escape the artillery, all are lost in three exchanges. At this point, Eustace sets off a smoke bomb for cover and attacks Akeem; personal combat may proceed.

Military weapons

Agents may find military weapons in the field. Army bases, terrorist camps, heavily guarded installations, and other areas may use this equipment. Obviously, these weapons are never issued by an espionage agency. Most military weapons are not useful in day-to-day spy work; a mortar is a fearsome device on the battlefield, but it is of little use when tracking suspects. Still, agents might discover military devices and attempt to operate them. Most infantry weapons are described in the TOP SECRET Companion. Desmond P. Varady's article, "Now That's Firepower!" (DRAGON® Magazine issue #102), covered a number of other military weapons. The weapons that have not previously been discussed are vastly different from small arms. Their effects must be described in a new format.

Untrained agents may not successfully operate these weapons; only those specifically trained in their use can make them work. The details on operation given here are provided mainly for nonplayer characters. The weapon descriptions are generic, describing in general terms what these weapons can usually do but not covering all possibilities. If you want an exact simulation of a given make of weapon, feel free to alter the statistics given here. For details on individual weapons, the U.S. government reports on Soviet military power are recommended. These are somewhat controversial, but they do describe many weapons systems from both superpowers. The artillery ranges given here may also be used in mass combat.

Mortar, 60 mm. This weapon cannot hit a target closer than 600'. It is effective as far away as 12,000'. The shell equals a fragmentation grenade. Hitting with a mortar is largely a matter of judging range. When a mortar is fired, roll percentile dice. If the result is less than half the agent's Observation score, the shell hits the target. Mechanical range-finders allow

a 30% bonus on this roll. Observation equals Willpower plus Knowledge, divided by two. If this roll is failed, the shell will be 1' off for every point above Observation that the gunner rolled. Use the grenade-miss rules (TOP SECRET game rule book, page 35) to see where the shell lands. In mass artillery combat, five mortars equal one cannon. A mortar weighs 5 lbs. (2.2 kg). Each shell weighs 2 lbs. A mortar can hurl a grapnel 450'.

Personal antiaircraft device. These hand-launched rockets are extremely new. They are rather sensitive and carefully controlled by the nations which produce them. The famed Stinger is such a device. A personal antiaircraft missile has a range of 6 miles. Aircraft hit by these missiles must check on the Explosive Use Against Vehicles Chart (TOP SECRET game rule book, page 37). These missiles are self-guided, but they must be fired properly. An agent using such a missile must roll percentile dice; a + 30 penalty is applied. If the result is above his Military Science/Weaponry AOK, the missile is ruined. The launching apparatus is disposable. These devices weigh 10 lbs. (4.5 kg).

Artillery. Modern cannons are quite varied. An average gun can shoot 88,620', firing a shell equal to 228 oz. of plastique in power. Fifteen minutes are required to load a shell, and a crew of five is usually needed for each cannon. A howitzer may hit a target as small as a trash can within its range. The operator must roll his Offense or below on 1d100 to hit; otherwise, the grenade-miss rules should be consulted, with the shell landing 10' off target for every point by which the firer missed. Most modern artillery is usually self-propelled, mounted on tanklike treads. Other devices are towed by trucks. Tube missile launchers have a range of 25 miles, with each tube launcher equaling three guns in mass combat. Each rocket equals 330 oz. of plastique in power. Loading each rocket requires 15 minutes, but a rocket launcher may hold 16 rounds when loaded. Otherwise, treat missile launchers as other artillery. If a target is not in view, artillery requires a spotter in the target area who must be in contact with the gunners. Radar may also be used, but the target may jam radar.

Cruise missiles. These missiles may locate and hit a building-sized target as distant as 1,550 miles away. These devices require a 10-man support crew. The firer must roll his Military Science/Weaponry AOK or lower on 1d100 to launch the missile successfully. Missiles of this type may be launched from submarines, surface ships, ground bases, and bomber aircraft. The warhead equals 1,500 lbs. of plastique. The older "ack-ack" antiaircraft guns force a pilot to check on the Bullet Use Against Vehicles Table (TOP SECRET game rule book, page 38) each minute of fire. They can only attack aircraft within 15,000'.

Large surface-to-air missiles are treated

as cruise missiles for launching purposes and can home in on airplanes as far as 200 miles away. An airplane hit by one of these missiles must check the Explosive Use Against Vehicles Chart at a +40 penalty. Radar jamming causes these weapons to miss 50% of their targets. Surface-to-air missiles must be launched from ground silos or large missile carriers.

Armor. Tanks may be armored with up to 6" of plate steel. A crew of four is needed for these vehicles. The main cannon can fire a shell equivalent to 160 oz. of plastique 6,000', using the same firing procedure as artillery. Five minutes are required to reload this gun. Most tanks also have a medium machine gun (as in the TOP SECRET Companion) and an "ack-ack" anti-aircraft gun (described above) with a range of 10,000'. A modern tank can be sealed against chemical weapons. Some armored vehicles have been known to mount huge flamethrowers which cause 2-20 points damage to all within 100' range. The speed of a tank is described in Table 1. Most tanks require one gallon of gasoline per mile and can store 50 gallons on board. Other armored vehicles have similar statistics. Missile racks can be mounted on military vehicles; they can hold up to 60 rockets and are treated as the personal missile launcher in the TOP SECRET Companion.

Aircraft. The speeds of various aircraft are described on Table 1. Helicopters can usually mount several medium machine guns, as per the TOP SECRET Companion; they also may carry missile racks as described for vehicles. A fighter aircraft carries one medium machine gun and four guided missiles. Each missile has a range of 11 miles and is fired in the same fashion as a cruise missile. The warhead equals 480 oz. of plastique. Air-to-air, air-to-ground, and air-to-ship missiles are possible. Fighter-bombers, like the F-16, may carry four extra missiles. Any of these rockets may be replaced by a cluster bomb equal to 550 oz. of plastique. Most of the damage is caused by shrapnel, and hard cover halves the damage.

Fighter-bombers may also carry a single high-explosive bomb equal to 1,500 lbs. of plastique. To see if a bomb hits its target, roll percentile dice. If the result is above the pilot's *Offense*, it misses. Use the grenade-miss rules in the TOP SECRET game rule book; the bomb will be off 100' for every point by which the pilot missed. The large bomb described above is guided by laser, giving the pilot a +10% bonus on his accuracy check in dropping this bomb.

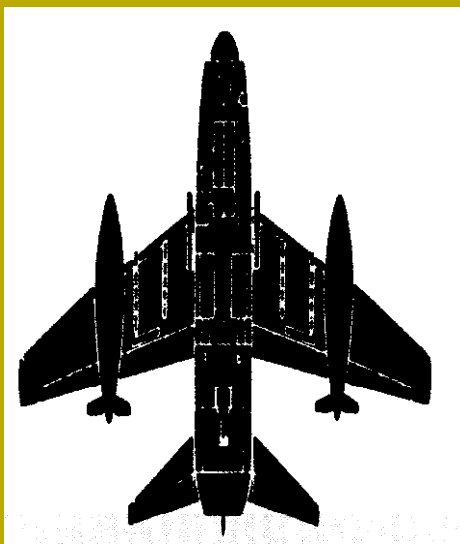
A typical jet fighter can fly 1,000 miles without refueling. Strategic bombers can usually fly 5,000 miles unrefueled. A bomber can carry as many as 10 of the large bombs described above or 100 cluster bombs. Large bombers can substitute one cruise missile for its bombs.

Naval forces. A ship can use many weapons of many sorts. Many larger ships carry a helicopter, which itself can be

fitted with weapons. All large ships require extensive crews of several hundred sailors; small ones may have only a dozen or so.

Many larger ships mount missile batteries; antiship missiles have a 60-mile range and equal 300 oz. of plastique. These missiles must be aimed by the firer, and their accuracy is determined as if they were artillery. Antiaircraft missiles equal the personal antiaircraft device in effect. Antisubmarine missiles are often carried; torpedoes and antisubmarine missiles are self-guided and fired as are cruise missiles. A ship hit by such a device must check on the Explosive Use Against Vehicles Chart. Naval cannon are usually treated as other artillery.

To hit a submerged target with an "ash can" depth charge, the user must roll under half his *Observation* on 1d100. The grenade-miss rules are used for failures. Every point by which the target is missed



equals 20' off-target. The charge causes all submarines within 90' to check on the Explosive Use Against Vehicles Chart. Additionally, warships are designed for ramming other vessels. This forces the victim to check on the Explosive Use Against Vehicles Chart. A battleship's 16" guns are treated as artillery for purposes of hit location. They have a 26-mile range, and their shells equal 75 lbs. of plastique. An aircraft carrier can carry as many as 62 jet fighters and 14 reconnaissance aircraft.

This information should cover most situations that arise in TOP SECRET games. Those who need exact details on a specific ship must consult another source.

CBW agents. Spies are never allowed to use chemical or biological weapons. If they are encountered in the field, they should not be tampered with. Proper authorities should be reached at once, even at the risk of ruining a delicate mission. More on this is said on page 63 of the

TOP SECRET Companion. International law forbids the use of chemical and biological weapons. No major nation has openly defied this ban, which is why CBW devices are important to security concerns. Secret agents may be needed to keep these poisons away from terrorists and unstable nations. Many such undesirables could produce CBW agents and may turn to them as an alternative to atomic bombs. Nations may employ spies to limit these devices. The alternatives do not bear thinking about.

Any gun which fires an explosive shell could also use a CBW shell. Some poison gases can be treated like the poisons in the TOP SECRET game rule book. Their chemistry is different, but the game effects are the same. The military employs several standard tear gases. Phosgene, another chemical poison, is an irritant reducing Physical Strength 1-100 points. Phosgene attacks are preceded by an odor of new-mown hay. Cyanogen and hydrogen cyanide may be treated as convulsory poisons. These gases smell of peaches and almonds, respectively. A gas mask protects an agent from the gases listed above.

Skin necrotizers reduce Charm and Coordination 1-100 points. If a victim is otherwise wounded, he will heal at half the normal rates. These hideous gases attack any exposed skin, causing it to

Table 5
Hallucination Table

Roll	Hallucination and results
01-05	The victim decides that the world is upside down. He attempts to roll along the ground instead of walking.
06-20	A random inedible substance seems delicious to the victim. He attempts to ingest it at every opportunity.
21-30	The victim believes himself to possess some super-human power (such as being able to fly). The victim tells all his associates about it. If challenged, the victim attempts to exercise the power, with possibly disastrous results.
31-40	The victim becomes engrossed in a vision and is immobile for 1-10 hours.
41-60	The victim feels that he has made an amazing discovery. He lectures a nearby character for 1-100 minutes.
61-99	The victim becomes terrified of ail people. If any character approaches within 10', there is a 50% chance that the victim flees, and a 50% chance that he attacks the offending character.
00	The victim permanently reverts to childlike behavior. He becomes a nonplayer character under the control of the Administrator.

Table 6
Biological Warfare Chart

Disease	Contagious?	Incubation period	Duration	Chance of death	Treatment
Virus	No	2-20 days	1-10 weeks	0% / 60%	—
Rickettsia	Yes	1-10 days	1 week	80%	A
Bacteria	Yes	2-20 days	1-10 weeks	90%	A*, B
Fungus	Yes	2-20 days	2-20 weeks	10%	—
Botulin	No	None	1 day	70%	A

* If antibiotics are given, the victim may make another roll of 2d10. If the result is below his Life Level, the agent is cured in 1-10 days. Otherwise, the treatment is ineffective.

red den and slough off. A gas mask is no help. Vesicants, such as mustard gas, also affect the skin. They reduce Coordination, Physical Strength, Charm, and Willpower 1-100 points each. An ointment exists which keeps mustard gas from functioning, if the victim also wears a gas mask; it must be used within five minutes of exposure. Mustard gas remains in an area for 2-20 days. Vesicants have a faint garlic smell.

A hallucinatory gas exists which has effects similar to LSD, acting as a deliriant poison. If it reduces a victim's Life Level below zero, the victim is rendered unconscious. The effects last 3-30 hours. A gas mask protects the wearer from this poison. Each hour, there is a 40% chance of a hallucination, rolled on Table 5.

Most deadly of all is the dreaded nerve gas. This substance may be absorbed through the skin or lungs. An exposed character loses one Life Level per minute; this continues even if the gas is dispersed. The victim does not realize that he is dying. Symptoms are a mild headache and difficulty in breathing. The victim's pupils shrink, his vision dims, he suffers nausea, and dies. Nerve gas is so deadly that it is not usually stored in active form. It is produced by the mixture of two harmless "binary gases." They are kept separate until the weapon is fired. When the two gases are mixed, nerve gas is formed.

Most nerve gases are colorless and odorless. An older version, tabun, is brown and has a fruity smell. Most nerve gases break up normally, but others contaminate an area for 1-10 weeks. Any who enter the area without protection are poisoned. Fortunately, the effects of nerve gas are (sometimes) reversible. A character who reaches zero hit points may be kept alive for 1-10 hours with continuous artificial respiration. Agents who have taken the first-aid course described in the TOP SECRET Companion or who have Health AOKs above 70 may perform resuscitation — but there is a 30% chance that the character giving first aid will be poisoned too. Atropine sulfate immediately negates all nerve gas effects. Automatic injectors of atropine have been developed which are worn by those who deal with nerve gas. They are strapped to an arm or leg; when a button is pressed, the wearer instantly receives an injection of atropine.

Very little is known about biological warfare. If used effectively, it could be far more devastating than any other non-nuclear attack. A character exposed to germ warfare must roll his Life Level or below on 2d10 to avoid infection. Agents may be infected by the weapon itself. Diseases are also spread indirectly by infected people or objects. A percentile roll below an agent's Health AOK allows him to avoid indirect exposure. Objects subjected to biological attack are contaminated for 1-10 hours. Washing or exposure to ultraviolet light removes biological contaminants. Contagious diseases may be spread by an infected victim. During the incubation period, a character is unaware that he is sick, possibly exposing many people. After this period, the victim falls ill for a length of time. Physical Strength, Courage, Coordination, and Charm are all reduced to half their usual score.

Some diseases have a chance of killing the victim. If the result from Table 6 indicates that the victim is slain, one Life Level per day is lost until the victim dies. Treatment A indicates that medical attention cures the disease in 1-100 hours. Treatment B means that vaccination makes a character immune. Some viral diseases are selected to be incapacitating; others are to be lethal. For this reason, there are two mortality chances listed. If an agent is cured or survives to the end of the disease's duration, he recovers 1-100 points in each lowered ability. Obviously, no ability is raised above its original score.

Modern CBW devices are remarkably effective. A CBW bomb, missile, or artillery shell affects an area 13,000' long and 2,000' wide. More precise poisoning can be performed by aircraft with a spray. CBW grenades, mines, mortar shells, etc., affect 10 square feet. Except as mentioned above, CBW devices may be treated as poison gases in the TOP SECRET game rule book. Poisons which remain in an area may be washed away with bleach. The Soviet Union is known to use a special decontamination van which mounts a turbojet engine. This is used to spray hundreds of gallons of soap and bleach over an area 2,000' long by 100' wide. Skin-affecting gases may be foiled by completely covering the body and by wearing a gas mask. The entire body including neck, hands, ankles, etc., must be covered.

Normal wet cloth is protective. For more (albeit controversial) information on these weapons, I recommend the book *The Ultimate Folly*, by Congressman Richard D. McCarthy.

Agent training

As mentioned before, agents are unable to use most military weapons without training, and these devices are almost never issued by espionage agencies. However, even if it is likely that these devices will be encountered in the field, it may be necessary for agents to use them effectively. A pilot, driver, or marine-vehicles course (as described in the TOP SECRET Companion) allows an agent to drive the appropriate sort of military vehicle, but it won't allow the agent to use the vehicle's weaponry. Weaponry training costs \$2,000 per week and increases the agent's Military Science/Weaponry AOK by 1-10 points. To benefit from this training, an agent must have a Military Science/Weaponry AOK above 90. One week is required to learn use of an infantry weapon, and two weeks are needed for artillery or tanks. Four weeks are required to learn the use of modern missiles, and six months are needed to learn the proper use of aircraft or ship based weapons. An untrained agent simply cannot operate complicated weapons like artillery or aircraft. Personal weapons, like mortars, may be fired without training — however, a -50 penalty is then applied to accuracy rolls.

Military operations often are important to espionage; they need not be avoided. Agents can interact with the military in a thoroughly playable system. When agents are sent on missions involving military weapons, they should always have a reasonable hope of survival. Give them places to hide, alternatives to combat, and weapons of their own. You may wish to use the optional Fame and Fortune point system if you plan many scenarios involving military weapons.

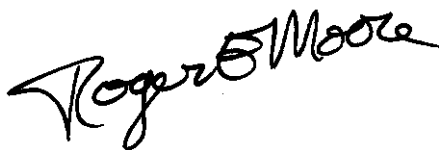
As a side note, bloodthirsty agents should not be allowed to wreak havoc with military devices, *Rambo* to the contrary. Injudicious characters may suffer fines, humiliating assignments, firing, imprisonment, or even assassination. Nonetheless, these weapons can add excitement to an espionage scenario — as long as agents avoid unfriendly fire.

Editorial psychosis

(continued from page 3)

archer-ranger (double specialization with the long bow) and Dave's halfling fighter/thief (who's probably cheating). Now, that's entertainment!

Good news: The raid to recover Mr. Potato Head was successful, and he can loiter in my office again without fear of being julienne-fried. So, as the rescuers said when they gave Mr. Potato Head back to me: "This spuds for you."



FORUM

(continued from page 6)

have been a DM. I know no DM who allows illusions to do damage as the spell is described in the *Players Handbook*. As a medical pathologist and author of some reviews of "voodoo death," meditation, and many related mind-over-matter claims, I've had to conclude (regrettably) that, on the evidence, our minds actually have only a very limited ability to affect our bodies. "Believed" phantasms that are sure-killers or instant escapes tend to destroy game balance.

In our campaign, and many others, pure illusions cannot do damage or cause pain. This makes them much more fun, and more challenging to use. A *phantasmal force* is an opaque, three-dimensional, silent, intangible thing. As such, it is extremely useful for intimidation, temptation, and/or concealment. A *phantasmal force* of a bonfire would fool a viewer who was not close enough to notice the illusion's lack of sound. An *improved phantasmal force* of a bonfire would fool a viewer who was not close enough to notice it produces no warmth or smoky smell. A *spectral force* of a bonfire would fool a viewer who did not attempt to, for example, roast a marshmallow over it. Viewers of any of these spells who have reason to be suspicious could be allowed to save vs. spells, or check on 1d20 vs. intelligence — if successful, they notice the fakery and can point it out to their friends.

A *phantasmal force*, *improved phantasmal force*, or *spectral force* of a monster would fool nobody who saw a weapon pass right through its body. *Shadow monsters* have AC 10, only a few hit points, and only illusionary special attacks — yet they are great for intimidation, and can protect a spell-caster for a few rounds. Viewers who save vs. spells (check vs. intelligence, etc.) or who have experience fighting the real versions of the monsters, will recognize the fakery, but anyone can do this. Illusions of damage-producing spells do no damage, and *shadow magic* does only slight damage, but they have great potential for intimidation.

A *phantasmal force* of a wall could hide the illusionist's party until someone touched the wall and found it to be insubstantial. A *phantasmal force* could also conceal a pit full of spikes,

etc. A *spectral force* of yummy-smelling shriekers could preoccupy a purple worm long enough to allow the illusionist and friends to escape.

The unique *phantasmal killer* causes death (-10 hit points) by causing cadaveric spasm. The 6th-level veil spell should be especially powerful. A victim who stepped into a bonfire concealed by a *veil* spell would feel pain and perhaps catch on fire. The perplexed victim would probably flee. A victim who tried to toast a marshmallow over a bonfire which was part of a *veil* spell would probably see, smell, and taste roasted marshmallow. An *alter reality* spell could make a *phantasmal force* of a bridge, a gold dragon, or a cleric casting a single *cure light wounds* spell real for the spell duration.

An illusionist should be able to create a believable *phantasmal force* of something that ordinarily has as many hit dice/levels as the illusionist. For example, a 6th-level illusionist could produce a good *spectral force* of six orcs, three gnolls, or a medium-sized white dragon (the latter breathing a harmless chill). Thus, advancing illusionists can produce more and more effective illusions, even using the same low-level spells.

To purists, I can explain that, in our game world, there is no fleece to serve as a material component for the spells as originally described. Instead, spellcasters use the dung of a male ox — hence the differences!

The original AD&D game rules were designed to reward creative thinking by players and DMs alike. In this spirit, non-damaging illusions serve better than any other spells to allow players to exercise ingenuity. They have greatly enhanced our own enjoyment of the AD&D game.

Ed Friedlander, M.D.
Johnson City, TN

I am writing in response to the letter from Craig Sessions which appeared in issue #116 of *DRAGON* Magazine. I am in total agreement with him. Female Dungeon Masters (Mistresses?) deserve all due consideration for their part in the game. There is absolutely no reason why male players should look down on a female player or referee.

I know of one young woman who became a DM. Let me tell all you chauvinists out there: she ran one of the best worlds I've ever seen! I took great pleasure in adventuring with her as referee. She had the most developed political structure (spread over four large continents), the most realistic dungeons (with sound engineering and sensible monster placement), and a real reason for an adventuring party to be in her world. She was also very patient with us, never raising her voice (except when in character). As a result, the game flowed very smoothly, with no shouting matches over rule interpretations and no foul language. She was also very willing to listen to different ideas, and she had to, for there were four DMs playing characters in her world.

In conclusion, gentlemen, get your heads out of the sand!

Nelson E. Hemstreet
Brick, NJ

A short comment on Archie Li's letter in the Forum, issue #116. Why did you buy the AD&D game anyway? You wanted entertainment, right?

I have been playing the game for seven years, and running dungeons for six of those years. After three or more hours of gaming, it gets

pretty intense. When a small bit of humor comes into play, it relieves the tension.

When I read "The Heart of Light" (*DRAGON* issue #84), I enjoyed it. I got a kick from "twenty-three skidoo," and even received a few chuckles from the *belch* cantrip.

My campaign is such that we can enjoy the jokes. It even enhances the spirit of the game.

Dave Robinson
Prescott, AZ

I am writing this letter to offer my thoughts on weapon specialization as outlined on page 18 of the AD&D game book, *Unearthed Arcana*. At first glance, it is an attractive addition to the game because it offers fighters the realism of achieving more skill with one weapon over another. However, its danger is realized once it is introduced into a campaign, for the power levels of all the PC fighters rise to unmanageable levels. For example, a 1st-level fighter who chooses to double specialize with a melee weapon, as any player would naturally have his novice character do, is thus granted not only a chance to hit better than that of an unspecialized 4th-level fighter, but the capability to regularly inflict damage in the two-digit range. This is not to say, though, that weapon specialization should be removed from the game entirely. Since it is now possible for a player to determine the class of his character before any dice are thrown (à la Player Character Generation Method V), something must be done to improve the fighter and thereby make the class equally as attractive as the more powerful cavalier or fighter subclasses.

Here, then, is my suggested addition to the rules for weapon specialization: Only those proficiency "slots" gained as a result of attaining a level of experience higher than first can be counted toward any type of weapon specialization. This means that normal specialization cannot be gained by any fighter of less than third level, and that double specialization and bow specialization (the most unmanageable of all) are restricted to those below fifth level.

This stipulation makes the system workable for me, but more conservative DMs can limit it further by not allowing specialists any more attacks per round than they would normally be allowed. Remember that, as a Dungeon Master, it is your duty to run your campaign by what feels right to you and your players, and not by the dictates of the sometimes seemingly ill-considered words of the rule books.

Peter C. Zelinski
Mansfield, OH

About the article written by J. A. Yates in *DRAGON* Magazine issue #115 — I think it's a very good idea that can be further expanded upon. The DM of the campaign I play in has already used the idea and also added the following: bonus and restrictions for spells. For example, Zeus can cast one *lightning bolt* per round; therefore, his clerics can also cast *lightning bolts* and they acquire it at 5th level. Its definition and components are the same as for magic-users. Another example, Odin "cannot raise the dead and healing force him to sleep." The cleric I had was not able to cast more than one *cure light wound* per day, or one *cure serious wound* per four days, or one *cure critical wounds* per week. As for *raise dead* and *resurrection* — forget it. It works well, adding spice to the game, and, like M. Yates said, it is a way in which the clerics can be different from one another.

Sylvain Robert
Trois-Rivieres, Quebec

The Warlock™ Redux

Adam Warlock™ and friends from the Marvel Universe™

by **Jon D. Martin**

In addition to his popular work on the Captain Marvel™ comic, Marvel's own Jim Starlin developed the Adam Warlock™ series, which found an extremely loyal following of its own. Warlock became an important part of the Marvel Universe™, and his comic remains one of the best of the past decade (in this writer's opinion, of course). If you liked the comic, you have some serious reading to do!

ADAM WARLOCK™

Him™

Artificial being created by the
Enclave™

F	In (40)	Health: 160
A	In (40)	
S	Rm (30)	Karma: 60
E	Am (50)	
R	Gd (10)	Resources: Fb (2)
I	Ex (20)	
P	Rm (30)	Popularity: 10

KNOWN POWERS:

Body Armor: Adam Warlock possessed Good body armor against all physical and energy-based attacks because of his dense body and bone structure.

Force Bolt: Warlock could generate a beam of concussive force with Incredible range and damage by manipulating cosmic energy through the cells of his body.

Flight: Warlock's cosmic energy-enhanced speed could reach Class 1000 in space (using natural space warps) or Shift X in atmospheres. If Warlock made a Red power stunt with this power, he could increase his speed to Class 3000 for brief periods.

Life Support: Warlock could survive in the vacuum of space with Class 1000 ability by manipulating cosmic energy.

Protective Cocoon: Warlock could spin a cocoon about himself in seconds at will, though he did so infrequently. The cocoon



was of Incredible material strength and granted him Monstrous recovery powers. Often, Adam underwent considerable growth in terms of physical and mental maturity within the cocoon.

Ability Enhancement: Warlock could gain a +2 CS to either Strength or Endurance for five rounds by manipulating cosmic energy. At his maximum Strength level, he could press 40 tons (his normal strength allowed him to lift 4 tons). This ability enhancement could be done once per day, and it granted him no increase in Health.

Soul-Gem: Originally a gift from the High Evolutionary™, this jade gem was one of six such gems scattered throughout the universe. Each of the gems was an item of vast power, and together their power could shatter stars. Thanos™ destroyed the other five gems in the process of draining their power, in his quest to destroy the stars as a love offering to Death™.

Warlock's gem had the following powers:

De-evolution — With this Amazing-strength power, Warlock could return beings which had been augmented in size and abilities to their original stock.

Communication — When necessary, the gem acted as a translator of Unearthly power and range, allowing Adam to communicate with other beings.

Soul Absorption — Power Stunts were required for the use of this Unearthly power, with the intensity equalling the Psyche of the intended victim(s). A +1 CS was applied to the intensity for each person beyond five people to be affected. Furthermore, this power could not affect more than two people with Amazing or better Psyche or one person with an Unearthly Psyche at a given time. In no case could the Soul-Gem affect any being with a Class 1000 or better Psyche.

When the gem drained a person's soul, Warlock gained access to the memories of the victim, granting him the benefits of any talents that the poor soul might have had. This may no longer be the case, for Warlock himself is currently imprisoned in the gem.

Sentience — The Soul-Gem has a mind of its own, and it is a world within itself. For the purposes of mental combat, the gem has the following statistics:

R	I	P
In	Mo	Un

In dire emergencies, the gem may substitute one of these attributes for Warlock's attribute of the same name for a duration of one round, allowing him to detect an otherwise lethal danger, puzzle out a complex problem, or resist a devastating mental attack. This, too, may have changed as a result of Warlock's stay in the Soul-Gem.

TALENTS: Aerial Combat; Martial Arts A, B, C, D, E; Thrown Objects; and, Spacecraft Pilot and Navigation. It should be

noted that Adam resisted being cast in the role of a leader in the past and would likely do so again if brought back to life.

CONTACTS: Warlock's last friendly contacts were with Pip™ and Gamora™. In the past, he was on friendly terms with the Avengers™, but the line-up of that team today is drastically different from the team with which he had dealings. Still, Moondragon™, Thor™, Captain America™, the Vision™, the original Iron Man™, and Spider-Man™ could be considered contacts. He was also on good terms with the original Fantastic Four™ and the High Evolutionary, but he is no longer on good terms with the Enclave (to put it mildly).

LIMITATIONS: In the past, Warlock had an adversary relationship with his Soul-Gem, which stemmed from his misunderstanding of the gem's true nature. A revived Warlock would know the truth about the gem and would most likely have fewer reservations about using the gem's powers in combat. To discourage this behavior, Warlock should be required to make a Psyche check at some point during a battle to avoid using the gem's powers to defeat foes. If he fails, the gem does its duty and Warlock loses 30 Karma. If Adam deliberately uses the gem to drain an opponent's soul, the Karma loss is raised to 50 points. Conversely, he should receive a 30-point Karma award for using the gem in a constructive or merciful way, including the absorption of the souls of dying people (+1 CS Power FEAT).

PERSONALITY: Adam Warlock was a champion of life in all of its forms. He possessed a strong sense of justice which did not allow him to stand idle in the face of oppression. Warlock was also extremely honest to himself and others, finding it difficult to lie even if given good cause. Wanderlust was another of his traits, and he literally crossed the galaxy in search of evil to fight or something interesting to do. More often than not, evil found him. In any event, Warlock should have no trouble keeping himself occupied if returned to life. If nothing else, Pip can get into trouble while Gamora and Adam are otherwise occupied.

BACKGROUND: Originally, Adam Warlock was called Him. Him was created as a weapon by a group of criminal scientists called the Enclave. Unfortunately for the Enclave, Him realized their scheme and destroyed their operations rather than become a part of it. For a period of years, Him wandered space, learning and maturing. After an encounter with Thor, he decided to return to his cocoon and contemplate his hitherto useless existence. The dormant Warlock was discovered by the High Evolutionary, creator of Counter-Earth™.

Upon his emergence from his cocoon, Him acquired his present name, the pur-

pose that he sought, and the Soul-Gem. Adam Warlock became the defender of Counter-Earth with that world's Doctor Doom™, who was a hero, and opposed the evil designs of the Man-Beast™. Warlock was slain in the course of the battle with the Man-Beast, but death did not hold him for long. He returned from the grave and used the power of the Soul-Gem to defeat the Man-Beast and his New Men™ once and for all.

For a time, Adam wandered the galaxy aimlessly. His wandering ended when he encountered the forces of the Church of Universal Truth™, an oppressive religious order founded by his own future self, the Magus™. The Magus was worshipped as a god by the Universal Church, and his frequent displays of power helped to insure both belief and loyalty on the part of his worshipers. Warlock fought his way across the galaxy through armies of these followers to confront his future self. Without the invention of Thanos of Titan, Warlock's cause would have been lost. Using the same Time Probe that he had used to recruit Gamora, Thanos allowed Adam to confront his life's destiny directly and choose the path that his life would take. To complicate matters further, the Magus had summoned the In-Betweener™, the being who had caused/would cause Adam's transformation into the Magus. Warlock managed to purify and destroy the path that led to the creation of the Magus, but he had little time to choose a new path. He leapt onto the nearest path, the shortest path, and journeyed to its end to absorb his own dying soul so that he could be certain that he did not become the Magus in his new life as well.

After a series of relatively minor adventures, Adam once more found himself involved with Thanos. This time, Adam realized Thanos's true nature as the champion of Death when he encountered the dying Gamora on a remote asteroid. She told him of Thanos's mad plan of stellar genocide, destroying the stars as a love offering to Death. Warlock used his Soul-Gem to absorb Gamora's essence and wasted no time in alerting the Avengers, Captain Marvel, the Kree™, and Moondragon to the cosmic threat. Together, they attacked Thanos but were defeated by him. Warlock was killed by Thanos during the battle.

However, Thanos imprisoned the Avengers instead of just killing them. The imprisoned Moondragon managed to send a telepathic distress call to Spider-Man, who sought out the aid of the Thing™. The two of them fared no better than the Avengers had against Thanos, but Spider-Man was able to free the Avengers from their prison. Their combined might was still not enough to insure victory over the mad demi-god. Spider-Man came through once more, knocking over a crystal globe in which Thanos had placed Warlock's Soul-Gem. Adam Warlock was freed from the gem and fulfilled the pur-

pose he had sought in life by defeating Thanos and turning him into stone with the power of the gem.

Warlock's spirit returned to the gem, where it resides with the souls of Gamora, Pip, and others who were affected by the gem's power. The gem itself is currently held by an Elder of the Universe™ known as the Gardener™. Adam's body was interred on Counter-Earth, which was later pulled from its orbit on the far side of the sun and dropped into a museum (!) by a race of beings known as the Beyonders™ —no relation to the Beyonde™ of Secret Wars™ fame, but unbelievably powerful nonetheless.

PIPTM
Prince Gofern
Alien (Laxidazian Troll)

F	Ty (6)	Health: 42
A	Gd (10)	
S	Ty (6)	Karma: 24
E	Ex (20)	
R	Gd (10)	Resources: Typical
I	Cd (10)	
P	Pr (4)	Popularity: -10

KNOWN POWERS: Pip possessed no known super powers.

TALENTS: Larceny (+2 CS to Resource checks, failure indicating that he's run afoul of the local law); Guns; Painting; and, Intoxication Liquors (+ 1 CS to Reason and Endurance).

PERSONALITY: Pip was degenerate, cowardly, obnoxious, and depraved. He was a likable chap! Pip was also loyal and could muster up what little courage that he had when he saw his friends in danger. Though a Troll by nature, Pip was a hero at heart. His optimism and humor served to counterbalance Warlock's brooding fatalism.

CONTACTS: Pip's only friendly contacts were Warlock, Gamora, and numerous bartenders scattered across the galaxy. He has many unfriendly contacts in the form of law enforcement officials on most of those same planets.

BACKGROUND: Pip was originally Prince Gofern of the Laxidazian race (two-hundred and sixtieth in the line of succession). His encounter with a group of Laxidazian Trolls changed that, and led him to discover firsthand that the liquor which the Trolls drank had properties that transformed the imbibers into a Troll. Pip was ostracized from mainstream Laxidazian society and wandered the galaxy, setting new standards for the Troll reputation for decadence as he did so.

Eventually, Pip was arrested and placed aboard the prison ship *Great Divide* by the forces of the Church of Universal Truth. In

the course of its travels, the *Great Divide* added Adam Warlock to its list of prisoners. Pip and Warlock became fast friends, and Pip aided Adam in the liberation of the ship. Pip continued to travel with Warlock, joining him in his struggle against the Magus. He later met his end at the hands of his "pal" Thanos while searching for Warlock. At present, his soul is contained in Warlock's Soul-Gem, along with those of Gamora, Warlock himself, and many others.



GAMORATM
Alien (Xen Whoberis)

F	In (40)	Health: 140
A	Am (50)	
S	Cd (10)	Karma: 70
E	In (40)	
R	Gd (10)	Resources: Ty
I	In (40)	
P	Ex (20)	Popularity: -20

KNOWN POWERS: Gamora's natural abilities were raised to superhuman levels by Thanos so that she would be able to kill the Magus. She possessed no other super powers.

TALENTS: Martial Arts A, B, C, E; Weapon Specialist (dagger); Acrobatics; Tumbling; Stealth (- 2 CS to opponent's Intuition checks); and, Spacecraft Pilot and Navigation.

PERSONALITY: Gamora feared nothing, but she did have the common sense to realize when a fight was out of her league.

She was calm, professional, and deadly to a fault. At the time of her death, she had begun to develop an attraction to Adam Warlock, a feeling that was mutual. If revived, she may continue to have these feelings — particularly since they've been together in the Soul-Gem for so long.

CONTACTS: Warlock and Pip are Gamora's only present friendly contacts. For several years she served the deceased Thanos of Titan, and beings who have knowledge of Thanos may know of Gamora by association.



LIMITATIONS: Gamora was created to kill the Magus. Thanos altered her moral perceptions so that she would have no qualms about slaying anyone who interfered with her mission. Her stay in the Soul-Gem has probably changed this. If so, she incurs normal Karma loss from killing. If not, she suffers no loss from directly killing a victim, but loses double the listed Karma penalty for noble deaths, mysterious deaths, and self-destructions that she allows to occur.

BACKGROUND: In what has become an alternate future timeline, Gamora was one of a peace-loving race that opposed the Magus and his Church of Universal Truth. The penalty for such opposition was annihilation, and the Xen Whoberis did not resist. Thanos saved Gamora from the holocaust and focused her newfound hatred of the Magus in intense physical and mental training. The purpose of the training was to make her able as well as willing to kill the Magus, Warlock's future self. To make her more able to carry out her task, the deranged Titan enhanced her natural abilities to superhuman levels.

Gamora fought alongside Thanos, Warlock, and Pip against the Magus. After the Magus was defeated, Gamora was ordered by Thanos to seek out and protect Adam Warlock because of his importance to Thanos's future plans. Before she could locate Adam, she herself was located by Drax the Destroyer™, a being who had been created to destroy Thanos. Drax attacked her on the basis of her association with Thanos. Gamora survived and returned to the starship *Sanctuary II* (*Sanctuary I* was destroyed in the battle with the Magus) to confront her master with new doubts that she felt about his purpose in seeking Warlock. She overheard him planning to build his star-destroying weapon using the power of the six Soul-Gems. Gamora attacked Thanos, hoping to end his madness with his life. She failed.

Warlock found the dying Gamora on a remote asteroid. With her last few breaths she told of her master's mad plan. Before she died, her spirit was absorbed by the Soul-Gem.

The Warlock Revived

A few suggestions about the use of Adam Warlock in MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game campaigns follow.

1. One of the major elements of the Warlock series was Adam's search for a purpose in life. If the campaign is to reflect the tone of the series, this element must be preserved. No matter how the Judge explains Warlock's return to life, he should have a good reason for it.

2. Do not carry the above statement to an extreme. A campaign in which some prophecy of cosmic gloom and doom dominates the player characters' every action is little or no fun to all involved. Pip is presented in this article for a reason — comic relief.

3. Be creative; there are a number of possible adventures for Warlock in the Marvel Universe. The Cult of Thanos still exists and could pose a threat to the galaxy. Warlock's "mate," Paragon™ (also known as Her™ — bet you'd never have guessed), is wandering the cosmos and would likely track Adam down if she learned of his return to life. Might she become a female version of the Magus? The possibilities are limitless! Use a few of them.



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Of course, reviving Adam Warlock would entail retrieving both his body (on the missing Counter-Earth) and his soul (in the gem on Gardener's forehead) — and the Gardener's current whereabouts are unknown. . . .

[Editor's note: Those readers interested in adding Her (once known as Paragon™) to your campaign may use the statistics given below, adapted from the newly released accessory MA2, Avengers™ Coast-To-Coast, by Edward G. Sollers.]

HER™

Paragon™

Artificial being created by the Enclave™

F	Rm (30)	Health: 210
A	Rm (30)	
S	Mn (75)	Karma: 50
E	Mn (75)	
R	Gd (10)	Resources: Fb (2)
I	Gd (10)	
P	Rm (30)	Popularity: 0

KNOWN POWERS:

Warlock's Powers: Paragon possesses the body armor, force bolt, flight, life support, and protective cocoon powers of Adam Warlock. In addition, she can utilize cosmic energy to rearrange the molecules within a small area (three cubic feet), though with sufficient power to do Amazing damage to anything within that vicinity. She can also project her cosmic life force in such a way as to reanimate dead beings, but this cannot restore a being's soul — the being is merely a zombielike construct. This latter talent succeeds with a Psyche FEAT on Her's part, and restores the Agility, Strength, and Endurance scores of the reanimated being to their former level. However, Fighting, Reason, Intuition, and Psyche are at Feeble levels.

TALENTS: Her has no known talents.

CONTACTS: Her has had few contacts with other super-beings and agencies, save for the Enclave (which she attacked). She is on good terms with the Thing, the High Evolutionary, and Starhawk™, however.

BACKGROUND: Her was the second (and last) artificial being created by the Enclave. Like her predecessor, she rebelled against the Enclave's control of her life and destroyed much of the Enclave's power. Retreating into a cocoon to consider her existence, she emerged on a search for Him — only to discover that Him had died as Adam Warlock. She attempted to resurrect his body but without success, as she lacked the Soul-Gem with his spirit. Afterwards, she went into space and was not heard from until recently, when she was seen to be heading back to Earth again.

The Role of Computers

by Hartley and
Patricia Lesser

Too often, we take for granted the many hours of hard work and planning it has taken to produce a module, a story, or a software program for our entertainment. Whether or not the final outcome was pleasing, we should respect the effort made and encourage such productions to continue, as innovation is not encouraged through stagnation. The hours of thought, writing, and programming can be staggering. We only wish we could cover every program that arrives in the marketplace, as well as those offerings you have indicated in your letters that you would like to see reviewed in our column. Unfortunately, this is an impossibility. Because this column is going to remain a bi-monthly installment, we must concentrate our efforts on those programs that reflect the highest quality. Certainly, this is purely subjective according to our likes and dislikes, but as we have garnered a lot of experience in the computer field, we hope our selections reflect the tastes of the majority of DRAGON® Magazine readers.

We currently have at our disposal the following systems that enable us to review almost any software offering released: Apple IIe, Apple IIc, Apple Macintosh Plus, Atari 1200 XL, Atari 520 ST, Commodore 64, and an IBM XT clone. As you can readily ascertain, with these machines at the ready, there are very few programs we cannot investigate.

Most adventure games and utility software offerings are released in multi-system formats. We usually select the program with the most graphic appeal and strongest fantasy adventure plot as the system type to review. We do not recommend one computer system over another; we feel that if a computer does what its owner wants it to do, then it is the right system for that individual's needs.

Occasionally, as is the case for this issue's column, two of our reviewed offerings are for a single computer system — in this case, the Apple Macintosh. This computer has definite appeal due to its high

resolution graphics, which are extremely crisp and clear, even though they are available only in black and white and varying shades of gray. Having used an Apple Macintosh for nearly two years now, we have yet to miss color as one of that machine's capabilities.

Our first review covers a program called *Orb Quest, The Search For Seven Wards*, an adventure/fantasy role-playing game from QWare, Inc. For the Macintosh computer, this adventure initially appears to be somewhat similar to the graphics structure of the *Xyphus* and *Ultima III* software games. This is because the screen graphics and mouse-controlled movement of the onscreen character are nearly identical in nature.

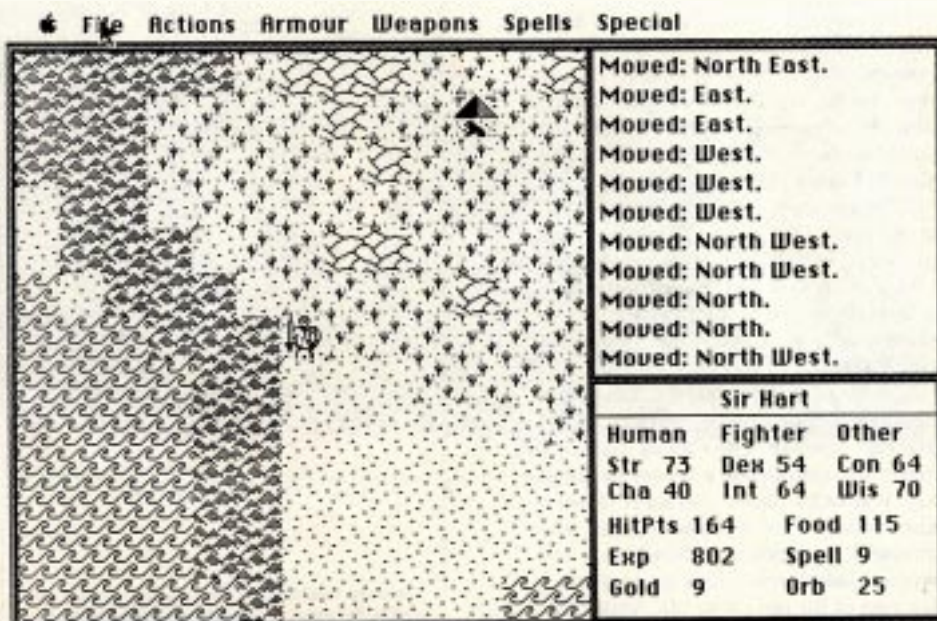
However, the truth is in the telling, and *vive la difference!* The adventure revolves around an object called the Orb. This mystical and powerful device was shattered and scattered into seven pieces, each section located in one of the seven corners of the world, housed in a pyramid. The player's job is to take over the quest of

King Cricken, who accidentally destroyed the Orb when casting magics in an attempt to defeat the Evil Ones (he accidentally sent them back to their netherworld). King Cricken disappeared in a flash of thunder and, although the forces of Evil were weakened that day, they have started to become a great terror once again. As the adventurer, you must find the pieces of the Orb, called Wards, and reassemble this powerful device to put a stop to the spread of Evil once and for all.

The mechanics of *OrbQuest* are extremely simple to master. Control of your onscreen character is accomplished by moving the mouse in the direction you wish your adventurer to move. When positioning your character over a city, town, or pyramid, you simply double-click the mouse button with the cursor placed on top of your character. This opens the "gates" of the city, and the screen environment changes from that of the worlds landscape to the interior of the city or town. Movement via the mouse moves you throughout the city, to the taverns, grocery stores, armories, weaponry shops, magic shops, and temples.

To buy groceries, you position your character next to the Non-Player Character (NPC) who is "running" the store and is also viewed onscreen. By clicking the cursor on the NPC, a dialog box appears onscreen. If you should choose the grocer's case, the box contains a scroll bar that informs you as to the amount of food you have purchased while scrolling the bar up or down. When you click on the "OK" box, the indicated number of food items are placed into your player's inventory, and the appropriate amount of gold is deducted from your character's possessions.

In the other shops, when you click on



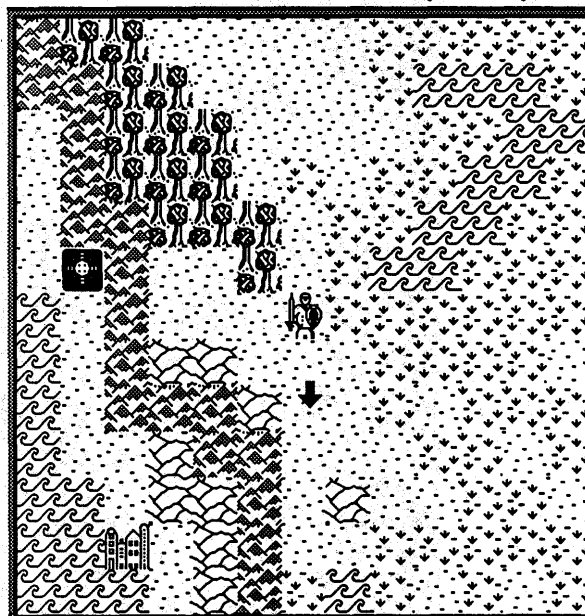
Screen #1: This *OrbQuest* screen shows the location of a pyramid — one which contains a piece of the Orb that the adventurer must assemble.

the NPC shop-owner, a different dialog box appears, allowing you to Buy, Sell, or Steal. Upon selecting Buy, a list of available items is displayed along with their pricing. (Various shop owners charge different prices for like items in the various cities and towns. A smart shopper makes note of these price structures while mapping their world, so that he can take advantage of the best prices when that particular item is needed.) You may Sell an item purchased in that shop by clicking on the Sell box. A list of the items you can sell is displayed, along with the offered buy-price from the NPC. It's your option to accept or disregard the offer for your equipment. If you click on Steal, you'd better hope you've got deft fingers!

Combat is very simple in OrbQuest. When confronted by an onscreen meanie, you merely place your character next to the monster, position the cursor over the beastie, and press the mouse "fire" button. A message appears on screen to inform you of the damage you've done and the damage inflicted upon you by the creature in the exchange of blows. It is highly recommended that you keep an eye on your surroundings. Position yourself in an advantageous geographical location, especially when confronted by more than one nastie. Should you find a box canyon, where access to your left, right, and rear is impossible, you can then fight a number of monsters, one-by-one, as they cannot surmount the obstacles protecting your flank.

Success is not determined exclusively by how well your character manages in battle. Such matters as bravery and intelligence play an important role in how well you succeed with this important quest. You should keep an eye on the Log Screen (to the right); it displays all manner of

File Actions Armour Weapons Spells Special



There is nothing to enter.
There is nothing to enter.
There is nothing to enter.
There is nothing to enter.
There is nothing to enter.

A Will-O-Wisp is in the area.

Moved: South.

Moved: South.

Moved: South.

Sir Hart

Human	Fighter	Other
Str 73	Dex 54	Con 64
Cha 40	Int 64	Wis 70
HitPts 29	Food 66	
Exp 854	Spell 5	
Gold 125	Orb 25	

Screen #3: This OrbQuest scene reveals a city on the left, situated near a body of water, some marshes, and hilly terrain.

information concerning your character's hit and experience points, spell points, the amount of gold accumulated, the amount of food being carried, and the number of Orb Points. This data window also reveals your adventurer's attributes: Strength, Intelligence, Wisdom, Dexterity, Charisma and Constitution. Intelligence and Wisdom are extremely relevant in dictating how well your character's lessons are remembered. For example, during travel through marshes, perhaps one will note that it not only takes longer to travel through such mucky areas, but that one's hit points tend to decrease with alarming alacrity as step after step is taken through the quagmire.

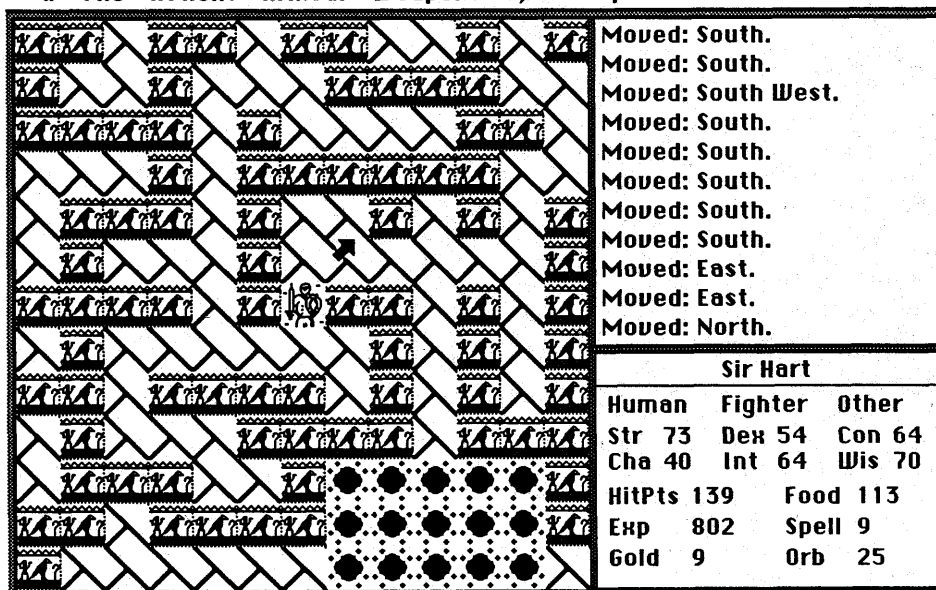
What kind of character can you play? When booting the game, you are offered a

choice of either loading an old character or creating a new one. The computer generates a random roll of numeric values for each ability, and it's your option to accept the designated values or ask for a reroll. The patient player will not accept the first roll offered, but will continue to roll until values range above the 50 mark in all categories. The values range from one to 99, with 99 being superhuman in proficiency. Once you've accepted your fate and have decided upon Class, Gender, and Race, you're on your own to search for the Pyramids. There are three player classes: Fighters, Spellcasters, and Thieves. You can select the gender of your onscreen representative, as well as its race: Elves, Dwarves, Halflings, Half-Orcs, and Humans are all available. Each race, except Human, possesses a bonus and a penalty to its attributes. For example, a Dwarven character possesses a higher Constitution than other races, but has a far lower Charisma. An Elf has a higher Intelligence and Charisma, but lower Constitution.

When determining what class you wish your character to be, it is best to keep in mind the attributes necessary for peak performance in any one of the three classes offered. A Fighter, for example, should possess a high Strength rating, while a Spellcaster would do far better with a higher score in Intelligence and Wisdom. A Thief without Dexterity is dead!

Always keep an eye on your "statistics," courtesy of the Character Status Window, and bear in mind that it is sometimes wiser to run away to live to fight another day. We could not have succeeded in OrbQuest without keeping special note of town and city locations — especially as some offered the most enthusiastically received services of the Cleric for instant

File Actions Armour Weapons Spells Special



Moved: South.
Moved: South.
Moved: South West.
Moved: South.
Moved: South.
Moved: South.
Moved: South.
Moved: South.
Moved: East.
Moved: East.
Moved: North.

Sir Hart

Human	Fighter	Other
Str 73	Dex 54	Con 64
Cha 40	Int 64	Wis 70
HitPts 139	Food 113	
Exp 802	Spell 9	
Gold 9	Orb 25	

Screen #2: inside the OrbQuest pyramid are mazes connecting different rooms. The large, black ovals are teleportation areas.

healing of lost hit points. And don't waste your money, either. Remember — healing takes cash, as do weaponry, armor, and spells. In case you happen to find a treasure chest after vanquishing an opponent, keep in mind that some chests are trapped and can cause your hit points to register a negative value if you're not careful. Other goodies that can be found in such treasure chests range from notes of importance to gold and other cash-value items, like pearls and rare gems.

One of the minor drawbacks to this game is the fact that you cannot save the program in progress unless you are in a town or city. Also, your spells won't work inside a pyramid, no matter how many spell points you have accumulated! Should you fear a pending confrontation between yourself and some nefarious nasties, one in which your health will be affected in a negative manner, you can try moving your character away from those creatures very quickly. If you're fast enough in your movement, you can leave them behind in the portion of the screen from which you have scrolled away. When you return, they will have magically disappeared from that portion of the screen.

All in all, *OrbQuest* is quite an enjoyable adventure — one that is not difficult to master, but that requires some modicum of thought. One of the toughest portions of this game comes *after* you've located and recovered the first part of the Orb from the first pyramid. In order to find the second part of the Orb, you've got to find the Isle of the Mystics and pass a ritual test. This Isle is not going to jump out at you!

OrbQuest is for the Apple Macintosh computer, is priced at \$49.95, and comes from:

QWare, Inc.
PO. Box 850415
Richardson, TX 75085

Survival after worldwide devastation has been the subject of many exciting science-fiction and fantasy stories. The same also holds true when talking about one of the newest releases from Strategic Simulations, an offering entitled *Roadwar 2000*. Devastating biological warfare has dismantled civilization in the United States. The year 2000 finds highways, turned into battlefields, where every car is a weapon, and the player is bent upon survival as you try to locate eight scientists for what's left of the federal government. These scientists must find a cure for the deadly microbes that are running rampant throughout the land. Your mission is one fraught with danger and intrigue as your search takes you onto the highways fighting everything from cannibals to other road gangs.

To succeed, you must build up your gang's fleet of vehicles, but you must also loot cities and towns for food, ammunition, guns, medicines, and fuel to maintain your operation. Attempts must be contin-



Screen #4: You've reached Philadelphia in *Roadwar 2000* — and the mutant hordes are just ahead.

ually made to entice compatriots to your road gang: mercenaries (well-trained soldiers of fortune), street gangsters (whose groups are normally comprised of strong leaders and worthwhile followers), armed rabble (certainly not the nicest additions to your gang), the needy (starving folk who'll do anything for food), and cannibals (the scum of the earth). You'll encounter other groups, such as lawful National Guardsmen who are well-armed and well-trained, renegade National Guardsmen who like to prey on those less fortunate souls, local gangsters (found in cities), bureaucrats, survivalists, the Reborn, Satanists, the Mob (also known as the country's second government), and invaders (soldiers from foreign shores who are very dangerous and control some portions of the U.S.).

When the game is booted up, you find yourself in a random position in a town or city. Full-color screen displays always inform you of your location on a scrolling map of the United States and part of Mexico. All of the major cities and towns are identified on the map, and your hunt for the eight scientists should begin by thoroughly examining your current location.

This is done by selecting the appropriate commands from the onscreen menu. The game's documentation completely lists all commands alphabetically; even if you don't see the required command in the onscreen selections, your manual should provide all necessary information. The commands run the gamut:

A. *Abandon vehicle*. This command comes in very handy when you suddenly find a vehicle with more capabilities than a vehicle you currently possess.

C. *City, Scouting*. This function checks

out the residents of a city. Unfortunately, not all of your gang members will return from such an expedition.

D. *Drop supplies*. This function allows a player to drop supplies for storage or to abandon supplies for other, more important ones.

E. *Empire status*. This informs you of the number and names of the cities you control, and also lets you know how you're managing in winning the game.

E. *Fix tires*. This function is a crucial element, since during combat on the highways and byways, your vehicles will sustain damage inflicted upon them by others. After combat, one should immediately fix all flats — otherwise, you could find yourself going nowhere fast!

G. *Gang status report*. This command should be checked *often*, for not only are the number and type of your gang displayed, but so is your comrades' health and the statistics for the vehicles that you possess.

H. *Heal*. This allows you to use antitoxins in healing any of your sick crew.

I. *Initialize save game disk*. This function is necessary if you are going to save your game in progress. One drawback with saving your game is that, in the Apple II version, you can only use the single drive for game saves, even if you have two disk drives. This means removing your game disk and inserting your save disk when so requested by the computer. When the game has been saved, the save disk is removed and the game disk put back into the drive. SSI should allow an option whereby the save disk can be utilized in your second drive to save time.

K. *Check the contents of a cache*. When

	Size	Mass	Structure	Max. speed	Maneuver	Braking	Acceleration
Hardtop	M	5	13	80 MPH	2	2	1
Flatbed	L	16	40	80 MPH	1	1	1

Mass indicates the capacity and weight of the vehicle; obviously, the flatbed truck can carry far more than the hardtop. The higher the number in Structure, the greater the amount of damage that vehicle can withstand. Speed in miles per hour designates the maximum speed attainable

for each vehicle; a sports-car convertible can top out at 120 mph! The ability to turn is maneuverability; this can be critical in those tight corners when confronting an enemy unit. Braking and acceleration are self-explanatory. The next set of factors for each of our two vehicles follows:

	Missile factor			Missile protection factor				Boarding factor			Crew capacity			
	L/R	F	B	L/R	F	B	TRS	L/R	T	B	Int.	Ext.	Fuel	Capacity
Hardtop	4	5	5	2	2	2	4	1/2	2	0	5	6	3	125
Flatbed	14	4	4	0	2	0	14	6/7	0	4	51	2	8	1280

you're looting and finding all manner of supplies, weapons, fuel, etc., you can only store as much of these goodies as you have space for, which is dictated by the number of types of vehicles that you own. If you find some appealing items and have no room for vehicle storage, you can store these items in a city.

L. Loot, search for. This command gets your crew digging around, looking for items to take.

M. Manpower report. This allows you to immediately ascertain your crew's personnel by rank: Armsmaster, Bodyguard, Commando, Dragoon, or Escort. Members are promoted from one rank to another after the successful completion of combat. Armsmasters are the most effective members of the team.

P. People, search for. This function is used to increase the numbers of your crew. (Keep your eyes peeled for Doctors, Drill Sergeants, Politicians, Agents, Scientists, and Healers!)

T. Transfer supplies to/from cache. When in a city, you can move your supplies to your vehicles from storage or vice versa.

U. Use Radio Direction Finder. When found, this item will aid your gang in locating the remaining scientists.

W. Damage report. When this key is pressed, the statistics on your active vehicle are displayed during the fire or movement portion of combat.

X. Examine supplies. This lets you know what supplies are currently available to your crew. Should your food be running low, this would be a good time to Loot an area for more!

All movement on the map is performed using the numeric keys, one through eight. Pressing "1" will move your onscreen icon North, "2" Northeast, and so on. The map display also reveals, through color and pattern, the type of area through which you are traveling, plains (slow travel, not much to find); farmland (can find food, but few people to join your gang); desert (try to avoid);

woods (good for fuel supplies); mountains (avoid as well); wilderness (no passage is possible); water (a rather sinking feeling); roads (fast, smooth travel with the occasional road gang encounter); cities (ranging in populations from 100,000 inhabitants to millions, and ripe for looting!); oilfields (vast fuel supplies, vast road gang battles); swamps (great if your vehicles are equipped with webbed feet); and Devastated Areas (signified by the skull and crossbones) where mutants rule.

Your vehicles are of prime importance. Each vehicle's statistics not only ensure your viability as a continuing player through combats, but also serve as a place to store those items so necessary to remaining whole. Vehicles include: motorcycle, sidecar, compact convertible, compact hard top, midsize convertible, midsize hardtop, sports-car convertible, sports-car hardtop, station wagon, limousine, van, pickup truck, off-road convertible, off-road hardtop, bus, tractor, construction

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K Society, Inc., Game Division, P.O. Box 702554, Tulsa, OK 74170, (918) 838-0555

vehicle, flatbed truck, and trailer truck. Each vehicle has numeric attributes assigned to specific features. For example, let's look at the differences between a midsize hardtop and a flatbed truck.

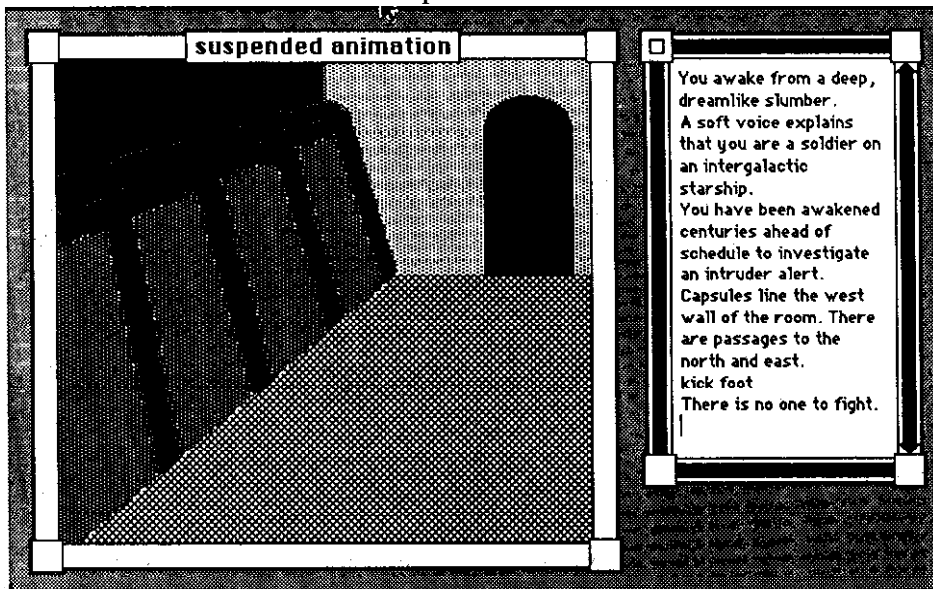
"Missile factors" is a little misleading, as it has nothing to do with the amount of damage your vehicle can sustain from a missile. What it actually refers to is the number of your crew who can fire from your vehicle when in one of the designated facings (L/R = left or right facing, F = front facing, and B = back facing). Missile protection is the amount of cover your vehicle offers against incoming fire; the higher the number, the better the protection, again as referenced to your vehicle's particular facing. TRS is the number of tires your vehicle must have in order to function. "Boarding" refers to the number of your crew who can "board" a friendly or unfriendly vehicle from your vehicle's indicated facing, while both the interior and topside crew capacities are indicated next. "Fuel" reveals the number of fuel units that a vehicle needs to move one hex (the truck certainly is a fuel guzzler). Lastly, the carrying capacity indicates how much storage there is for those goodies you're finding in the cities and byways of this decimated nation.

Combat involves your vehicles; you may accumulate as many as 15 vehicles as you progress through the game. The game affords you the opportunity to become involved in combat as detailed as single moves, or to be involved in a quick combat wherein the computer handles the details for you. Our preference is for what is known as "Detailed Road Combat." In this mode, you can have either auto or manual deployment of your crew to your vehicles, which are then displayed onscreen along with the terrain and the opposing vehicles. You must input every move for your vehicles, taking into account the maneuverability of each separate conveyance and adjusting speed, etc.

Our favorite method is to allow the enemy to come full bore at a group of vehicles which we have positioned initially at an angle to the opposition forces. This allows us to open fire with the greatest number of crew from our cars, trucks, and other vehicles, aiming first at the enemy vehicles' wheels. Then, as they draw closer (if they haven't crashed by then), it's time for pot-shots at the hostile crew members situated both topside and inside their cars. Finally, we bring in our heavy vehicles to ram those remaining antagonists, usually broadside. Naturally, the enemy is also thinking of similar tactics, so each battle is different, requiring strategic deployment and consideration for those little nuances that come with experience in play.

After the combat, you're given the opportunity to scavenge some of the supplies that have made it through the bitter battle (that's if you win, of course). In the northern climes, as in the geographical area as

File Edit Commands Weapons



Screen #5: This is a scene from a pre-made adventure in *World Builder*. You control all the aspects of the windows, designing the entire adventure.

shown in Screen #4, it's mighty handy if you've found snow tires somewhere in your travels. Our greatest success, after nearly 12 separate starts, has been in Mexico and the Southwest. We started our most fortunate campaign in Monterey, Mexico, and began our slow but steady conquest of surrounding cities at that juncture. The weather was not inclement, and we soon pushed our holdings northward into Texas and east to New Orleans. As we conquered, so we gained, garnering heavier vehicles, all the time promoting our crew to Armsmasters or Bodyguards. Our plan at present is to conquer California, move through the Northwest, and then strike eastward toward the northern tier states. Perhaps in our next column we'll be able to report on our success or demise. *Roadwar 2000* is a great offering and is easily enjoyed by players who have fantasy role-playing backgrounds because you do, indeed, control the shots for your crew. Our highest recommendation, despite the fact that such is time consuming, is to *save your games* after each successful combat! *Roadwar 2000* is currently available in Apple II and Commodore 64/128 formats, with Atari 8-bit and IBM micro-computer versions planned for the near future.

The price is \$39.95. *Roadwar 2000* is available from:

Strategic Simulations, Inc.
1046 North Rengstorff Avenue
Mountain View, CA 94043
(415)964-1353

For those interested in creating their own adventures, their own worlds, and their own graphics to accompany the story, we heartily recommend *World Builder* from Silicon Beach Software. We have yet to see a world-design kit like this

one, which is available for the Macintosh computer.

This is not simply a game that you place in your disk drive, boot up, and play; it is a professional game-design program that requires the user to become familiar with a BASIC-like language in creating everything from onscreen graphics to dialog within the program. We see far more uses for this product beyond game design; it could also be used by schools in training programs and tutorials for special classes, storyboarding by animators, and so on. *World Builder* allows you to explore as many as 2,500 different scenes, each presented with its own graphics window. Any number of objects or characters can be "met" by the player, and a library of digitized sounds adds realism to every action you wish to coordinate.

The first activity one must accomplish is to design your game, whether on paper or using *World Builder*. This is followed by actually drawing the scenes, the various objects, and the characters that your story will manipulate (this can all be done with *World Builder*). Each object and each character is then defined. Character strengths and weaknesses are assigned, and objects can also possess magical attributes. Once all of these pieces have been created, *World Builder* glues it all together in a playable form. The end product, if planned and built carefully, can rival some of the commercial products offered today. Give copies of your game to friends to see how well they like it. If it's a hit, sell your program and become a professional game designer. Most of all, enjoy yourself while accomplishing the satisfaction of knowing you built the game from scratch.

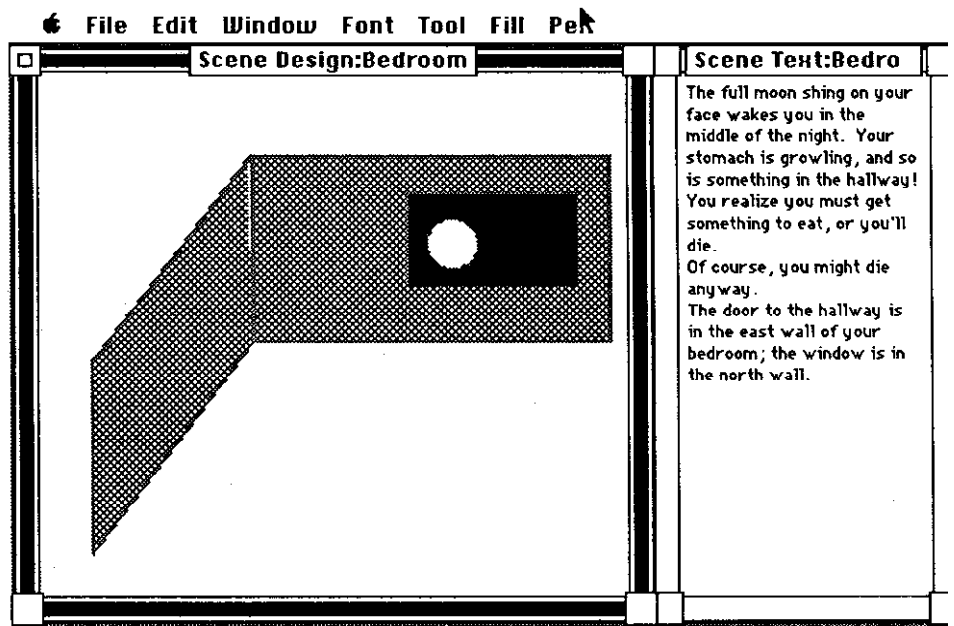
A shell is first required in which your world is created. Within this shell, *World Builder* utilizes windows to control what is

done. Every location in your story has four components, all of which you control. These components are comprised of Design (pictures that appear when the scene is entered), Text (descriptions and words that appear when the scene is entered), Data (in which sounds are linked to the scene and in which directions are available), and Code (data that tells the program how to handle actions the player commits in the scene).

Without a map, everything can go awry, so the map-making skill is first drawn upon. Each location in your story is listed as a scene, and these are assembled as boxes in the Scene Window. As the locations are built, you can enter each scene and design it by using the graphics tools in World Builder: Scene positions can be changed anytime you wish, simply by dragging the scene box to a new position in relation to the other scene boxes onscreen.

When entering a scene, you not only input which exits are available (known as blocking), but you also enter the text to be associated with that scene and the objects within the scene. Objects can be given special attributes — for example, the player must pick up an object or he cannot enter another room that will be found later in the adventure. To further the example, an orange found on a table possesses magical properties that, when eaten, strengthens the player, allowing him to open a jammed door later in the adventure).

Pictures can be imported into world Builder not only from the likes of MacPaint and MacDraw, but also from other games like Enchanted Sceptres — an adventure game also from Silicon Beach Software (in fact, world Builder constructed that commercial offering). You



Screen #7: Another "location" from World Builder. Using the graphic tool element, you create the scene designs and text for all your adventures.

can also zoom into individual pixels of any picture to edit them to your satisfaction.

The Code used by World Builder is a programming language and has its own syntax, or rules, that must be followed. However, with a little practice, even a novice computer user should have no problem dealing with this powerful method of game construction. For example, the code

```
MOVE[PLAYER@]To[STORAGE@]
```

simply indicates that the current player is to be moved to a scene that cannot be visited; in other words, it saves the game. Consider the following code:

```
IF[TEXT$ = "take magic ring"]THEN
  LET[SPIR.STR.CUR# = SPIR.STR.CUR# + 25]
END
```

What this code indicates is that the player's current spiritual strength is to be increased by a factor of 25 points if she picks up the magic ring.

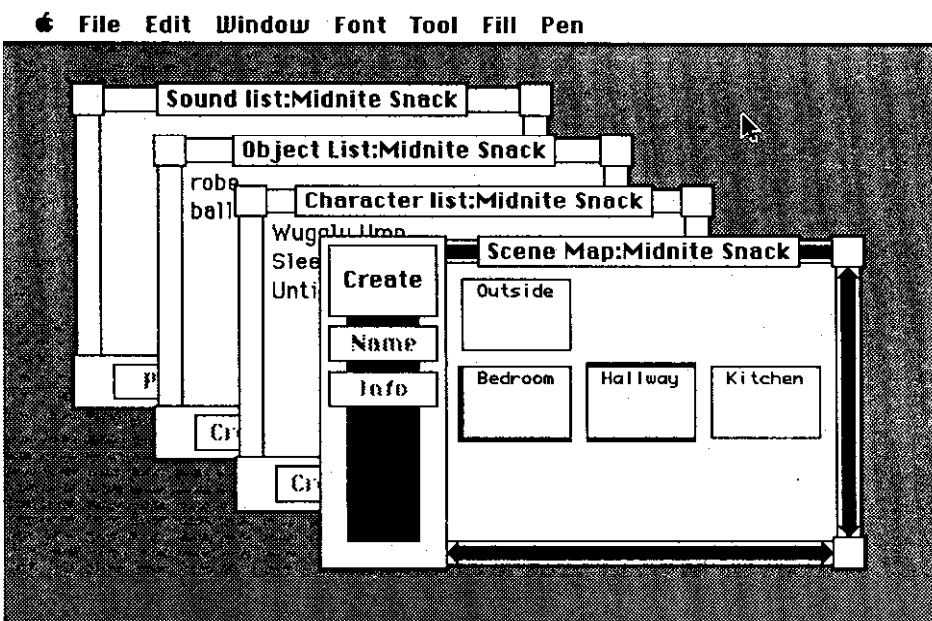
You might also wish to tie a special ability in to this increase of spiritual strength; unless this attribute reaches, say, a value of 220, this additional ability won't be granted to the player. This could be accomplished with the following code:

```
IF[SPIR.ACC.CUR#>220]THEN. . .
```

You can also designate a global environment. Should the character's strength fall below 25, you might want the program to automatically inform the player of the lowered physical state, regardless of what scene the game is in or how long the game has been in progress. A code statement for this particular event would read something like this:

```
IF[PHYS.STR.CUR#<25]THEN
  PRINT[You are extremely weary!]
END
```

The variety of worlds, scenes, and characters you can create and motivate seems endless. The game may be as large as 16 Megabytes, with 2,500 scenes per game. The package comes with a complete adventure code summary and an extremely easy-to-follow tutorial that will have even novice programmers planning and creating their own games within half an hour! We are really impressed with *World*



Screen #6: These windows comprise the shell of all adventures that you design with your World Builder program.

Builder. It should be noted, however, that this program is not for the casual gamer who wishes to put only a limited amount of time and effort into his creation. Thought is required, as is an understanding of the programming syntax. Once this is mastered, you'll be well on your way to creating exciting adventures straight from your own mind. *World Builder* is available from:

Silicon Beach Software, Inc.
P.O. Box 261430
San Diego, CA 92126

There are also three additional sound disks that you can purchase for *World Builder* that add drama to your adventure. The first Sound Disk is *Fantasy and Adventure*, the second is *Space/Science Fiction*, and the third is *Wild West and Outdoor*. Each disk is \$15, or all three can be purchased for \$35.

The following new releases appear to all have the makings of success for their parent companies.

From Activision, Inc. (2350 Bayshore Parkway, Mountain View, CA 94043: (415) 960-0410) is a computer game based upon the Jim Henson movie, *Labyrinth*. *Labyrinth: The Computer Game* is an animated graphic adventure that has riddles, mazes, and goblins. It places you in the evil Goblin King's grasp, locked within his labyrinth. You have 13 hours to find the Goblin King and thus regain your freedom. This offering is available for the Commodore 64 and 128 systems at a suggested retail price of \$34.95 and for Apple II computers at a pricing of \$39.95.

Also coming from Activision is a computer game rendition of *Aliens*, the nerve-shattering film from Twentieth Century Fox. From what we hear, the game will possess actual screenshots from the movie!

Electronic Arts (1820 Gateway Drive, San Mateo CA 94404: (415) 571-7991) has released *Star Fleet 1 - The War Begins*, an advanced space-battle simulation game for IBM micros, Apple II computers, Commodore 64/128 and Amiga systems, and Atari ST and 8-bit computers. We are very impressed with this offering, and are currently running the game on an IBM. This is a strategic space battle between two opposing forces. As members of the Alliance, players must protect the outer regions of Alliance territory from the invading fleets of hostile aliens from the Krellan and Zaldran empires. There is a sense of realism to the game that is unmatched by other offerings. Player's must graduate from the Star Fleet Officers' Academy and then progress through the service ranks.

Electronic Art's second offering of note is *Robot Rascals*, a combination card and computer game. Two to four players embark on a zany scavenger hunt using any one of 10 onscreen robots and two decks of special playing cards. This is a great

family game and is available for the Apple II computer family (\$44.95) and the Commodore 64/128 computer (\$39.95). This one has great onscreen graphics!

From Epyx (600 Galveston Drive, P.O. Box 8020, Redwood City CA 94063: (415) 366-0606) comes the *Movie Monster Game*, starring Godzilla, King of the Monsters. You become the star in your own production with this offering. Instead of fighting the monster, however, you become the monster, breathing fire, trampling cities, atomizing jets in the sky, and releasing monstrous frustrations. You can select one of six monster types and one of six cities to devastate! The *Movie Monster Game* is available now for Commodore 64/128 systems, and will be available for Apple II and IBM micros before the end of the year.

IntelliCreations, Inc. (19808 Nordhoff Place, Chatsworth CA 91311: (818) 886-5922) has released the second, supplemental disk to their *Mercenary* adventure game. The second disk is *Mercenary - The Second City*, and follows up the *Escape From Targ* science-fiction adventure game. The company has also added *Swords & Sorcery* to their line of titles. This is a role-playing fantasy game that takes you through the subterranean corridors of the underworld on a quest for material, physical, or spiritual power. Two other new offerings are *Saracen*, an arcade-style adventure that sends a brave young crusader through 100 mazes of increasing complexity as he seeks out and tries to destroy the evil Saracen warrior, and *Black Magic*, another 100-screen arcade-style adventure that places the player in a world of fantasy, pitting good against evil. These last three games were scheduled for release in January of 1987 and will be available for the Atari B-bit machines, Commodore 64/128, and Apple II computers. No pricing has yet been set.

For those who have Macs and AppleTalk, and have wondered what it would be like to participate in a real-time game via their network through two systems, there is *Strategic Conquest II* from PBI Software, Inc. (1111 Triton Drive, Suite 201, Foster City CA 94404: (415) 349-8765). This is a strategy game wherein one must discover, explore, and conquer an unknown world. The player commands armies, destroyers, submarines, battleships, aircraft carriers, transport ships, fighters, and strategic bombers in the attempted conquests. Two players can battle each other on one Mac; if they have two machines, they can link them together with a direct connection between the printer ports or they can form a connection through an AppleTalk network (this latter mode requires passwords). The game incorporates digitized sound and is priced at \$59.95.

The *Coveted Mirror* from Polarware/Penguin Software (521 Hamilton, P.O. Box 311, Geneva IL 60134: (312) 232-1984) has been enhanced with the company's new Comprehend language system. Comprehend understands full- and multiple-sentence commands, and every part of speech. Unlike other parser systems, Comprehend even tries to make the best sense out of what you do in case a word is not totally understood by the program. The magical *Coveted Mirror* has been shattered in this graphic adventure, and you must recover four of the five shards from the broken mirror, which have been stolen by the black-hearted villain Voar. The price for this game is a reasonable \$17.95, and it is available for the Apple II computer family.

Thanks for joining us this issue. If you have any comments, queries, or products that you'd like us to review, please write to us at:

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CONVENTION CALENDAR

Convention Calendar Policies

This column is offered as a service to our readers around the world. Anyone may place a free listing for a game convention here, but the following guidelines **must** be observed.

In order to ensure that all convention listings contain accurate and timely information, all material should be either typed double-spaced or printed legibly on 8½" x 11" paper. The contents of each listing should be short, succinct, and under 100 words in length.

The information given in the listing **must** include the following information, in the following order:

1. Convention title and dates held;
 2. Site and location;
 3. Guests of honor (if applicable);
 4. Special events offered;
 5. Registration fees or attendance requirements;
 6. Address(es) and telephone number(s) where additional information and confirmation can be obtained.
- Convention flyers, brochures, newsletters, and other mass-mailed announcements run the risk of not being considered for use in this column; we desire to see a cover letter with the announcement as well. No call-in listings are accepted. Domestic and foreign conventions are welcome.

WARNING: We are not responsible for incorrect information sent to us by convention staff members. Please check your convention listing carefully! Our wide circulation ensures that up to a quarter of a million readers see each issue. Accurate information is your responsibility!

Convention listings should be mailed by the copy deadline date to Convention Calendar, DRAGON® Magazine, P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva, WI 53147. Copy deadline dates are the last Monday of each month, two months prior to the on-sale date of an issue. For example: The copy deadline for the August 1987 issue is the last Monday of June 1987. Plan ahead!

If a convention listing must be changed because the convention has been cancelled, the dates have changed, or incorrect information is printed, please contact us immediately! For any questions or changes related to this column, please call either Robin Jenkins or Roger E. Moore at (414) 248-3625.

room, seminars, SCA demonstrations, a flea market, and a figure-painting contest. Memberships are \$15 through Feb. 1, \$20 at the door, and \$10 for one-day registrations. For more details, contact: DUNDRACON XI, 386 Alcatraz Ave., Oakland CA 94618.

ORCCON '87, Feb. 13-16

The 10th running of this gaming convention takes place at the LAX Hyatt Hotel. Featured events include role-playing, wargaming, miniatures, computer, and family game tournaments. Other events include seminars, demonstrations, auctions, flea markets, and an exhibitor's area. Registration is \$16 in advance and \$20 at the door. For more information, contact: ORCCON '87, c/o DTI, P.O. Box 8399, Long Beach CA 90808, or call (213)420-3675.

FOLIE-CON '87, Feb. 27-March 1 *

This bilingual gaming convention will be held at the Ramada Inn in Montreal, Quebec. Featured events include AD&D® game tournaments, a variety of role-playing games, micro-armor and miniature events, 24-hour videos, wargames, and BASTON. There are lots of prizes awarded to tournament winners. Registration fees for the weekend are \$10. For more details, contact: FOLIE-CON '87, 4651 Berri, Montreal, Quebec, CANADA H2J 2R6, or call (514)526-1174.

UN-CON '87, Feb 28-March 1

Sponsored by Wargames Unlimited, this gaming convention will be held in the Keene Johnson Building on the Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond KY. The convention features an AD&D® game tournament, an open CHAMPIONS™ game tournament, and a RISK® game tournament. AD&D® game tournament players must preregister; other tournament players are also encouraged to do so. A dealers' room is available, and open gaming is encouraged. The convention opens at 9 A.M. each day, with most events beginning at 10 A.M. Preregistration is \$4 per day or \$5.50 for the weekend; at-the-door registrations are slightly higher. For more information, contact: Wargames Unlimited, c/o Robert McCool, 135 Brockton, ECU, Richmond KY 40475, or phone (606) 622-2467.

KING KON 7, March 13-15

Celebrating its seventh year of success, King Kon 7 will be held this year at the Embassy Suites at 7290 Commerce Center Drive in Colorado Springs CO. Robert Vardeman is the guest of honor, along with Somtow Sucharitkul as toastmaster and Don C. Thompson as fan guest of honor. This science-fiction convention features author's readings, panel discussions, lectures, an art show and auction, movies, a 22-hour con suite, a masquerade contest, and much more. Memberships are \$17 until Feb. 1st, and \$20 at the door. For more details, send a SASE to: KING KON 7, P.O. Box 16597, Colorado Springs CO 80935, or call (303)520-1241.

MARCH FANTASY REVEL, March 13-16

This convention will be held at the Downtown Ramada Inn in Milwaukee WI. It features several RPGA™ Network AD&D® game tournaments, including one for *Oriental Adventures*, and every tournament player gets a prize. Other board and role-playing games are offered. Special guests Harold Johnson, Jim Ward, and Frank Mentzer will be present. Free movies, a large dealer area, a used-game auction, door prizes, a miniature-painting contest, and a 24-hour game room are provided. Reservations should be made by March 1st; guests must be identified as a "GAMER" to receive special room rates at the Ramada Inn (call the inn at (414) 272-8410). All attendees receive a discount coupon for a meal at the inn. Registration fees are \$4 per day and \$8 for the weekend if preregistered; \$5 per day and \$10 for the weekend if registered after March 1 or at the site. Call Keith Polster at (414) 338-8498 or write to him at 1812 West Morgan Drive, West Bend WI 53095 (with SASE enclosed) for information on judging, playing, and dealer space.

TOTAL CONFUSION, March 13-15

This role-playing and wargaming convention will be held at the Yankee Drummer Inn in Auburn MA, and is sponsored by That's Entertainment of Worcester MA. Events include AD&D®, TWILIGHT 2000™, CHAMPIONS™, Star Fleet Battles, and CALL OF CTHULHU® game tournaments, in addition to many others. There will be a dealers' room available as well. Preregistration is \$5 per day if paid before Feb. 20; after that, all registrations are \$6 per day. For further information, contact: That's Entertainment, 151 Chandler Street, Worcester MA 01609; telephone (617)755-4207.

HOUSTON FANTASY FAIR, March 20-22

Sponsored by Bulldog Productions, this comic book, science-fiction, and film supershow takes place at the Houston Marriott Astrodome, 2100 S. Bracewood. This event includes appearances by dozens of comic-book artists, writers, editors, and publishers, as well as a number of film personalities. Other features include a huge dealers' room, a professional art show, an art contest, an art auction, video rooms, a masquerade, numerous workshops, previews of upcoming motion pictures, and a variety of gaming events and open gaming competition. Tickets for this three-day event are \$20 through March 1 and \$25 thereafter. For more information, contact: Bulldog Productions, P.O. Box 820488, Dallas TX 75382, or call (214) 349-3367.

SIMCON IX, March 20-22

This convention will once again be held at the University of Rochester's River Campus. Events include role-playing tournaments, Star Fleet Battles, miniatures events, demonstrations, movies, and a dealers' room. There will also be a costume party. Registration fees are \$7 before March 5, 1987 and \$10 at the door. For more information, write to: SIMCON IX, P.O. Box 29142, River Station, Rochester NY 14627.

UMF-CON, March 21

This one-day convention takes place at the Student Center of the University of Maine in Farmington. Offered events include AD&D®, TOP SECRET®, RISK®, and MONOPOLY® game competitions, as well as a variety of other role-playing and board games. Registration for the convention is \$5; each game has a \$2 entry fee. For more information, write to: Becky Parker, Secretary, Table Gaming Club, c/o Student Life

☆ indicates an Alaskan convention.

* indicates a Canadian convention.

DUNDRACON XI, Feb. 13-16

The oldest gaming convention on the West Coast, DUNDRACON XI will be held at the Oakland Airport Hyatt Hotel. Events include open gaming, con-sponsored games, a dealers'

Office, Student Center, South Street, Farmington ME 04938.

CONTEST IV, March 26-29

This four-day gaming convention will be held at the Hilton Inn in Tulsa OK. Featured events include role-playing, board, and miniature gaming, a figure-painting contest, video movies, a dealers' room, and a computer room. Preregistered memberships are \$6 until March 1 and \$8 at the door. For more information, contact: CONTEST IV P.O. Box 4726, Tulsa OK 74159-0726.

MAGNUM OPUS CON 2, March 27-29

This fantasy and science-fiction convention, which is sponsored by the Middle Georgia Society for Fantasy and Science Fiction, will be held at the Columbus Iron Works and Convention Center in Columbus GA. Events include a gaming tournament, a miniatures-painting workshop and contest, movies, masquerades, open gaming, an art show and auction, and a variety of other activities. For more information, contact: MGC(SF)2x, 4315 Pio Nono Ave., Macon GA 31206.

STELLARCON XII, March 27-29

This science-fiction and fantasy gaming convention will be held at the Elliot University Center on the UNCG campus in Greensboro NC. Larry Niven is the guest of honor, with other guests including Tracy and Laura Hickman, Allen Wold, and James Roberts. Featured events include a costume contest, cabaret-style entertainment, trivia competition, movies, an amateur film competition, and of course, tournament and open gaming. Registration is \$12 until March 1 and \$15 thereafter. For further details, contact: Daniel Richardson, 2527 Branchwater Road, Pleasant Garden NC 27313.

ALASCON VIII, March 28-29 ☆

This fantasy and science-fiction gaming convention will again take place at the University of Alaska campus in Fairbanks. Role-playing games, miniature painting competitions, and AD&D® game tournament are sponsored. For more information, contact: ALASCON VIII, Box 80925, Fairbanks AK 99708.

COASTCON X, March 28-30

This science-fiction and gaming convention will take place at the Gulf Coast Convention Center in Biloxi MS. Events include movies, gaming, tournaments, an art show and art auction, a costume party, and a scavenger hunt. Guests include L. Sprague and Catherine de Camp, Real Musgrave, Dave Dorman, and a surprise game designer from Iron Crown Enterprises. Registration is \$20 at the door. For more details, contact: COASTCON, Box 1423, Biloxi MS 39533.

NOVA 12, March 28-29

This Detroit-area science-fiction and gaming conference will be held at the Oakland Center of Oakland University in Rochester MI. Guests of honor include Hugo-Award winners Timothy Zahn and George Laskowski, and FASA BATTLETECH™ game writer, Blaine Pardoe. Events include a wide variety of role-playing and board games (CALL OF CTHULHU®, TWILIGHT 2000™, and D&D® games, and much more), as well as lectures, panels, SF and fantasy films, SCA demonstrations, a costume competition, and a whole lot of fun. Hours for NOVA 12 are from 10 A.M. to midnight on Saturday and from 10 A.M. to 8 P.M. on Sunday. Admission is \$3 for a single day and \$5 for both; Oakland

University students are admitted free of charge. For further details, contact: NOVA 12, P.O. Box 61, Madison Heights MI 48071-0061, or call (313) 370-2687.

AGGIECON 18, April 2-5

This science-fiction and fantasy convention will be held in the Memorial Student Center at Texas A&M University. Ben Bova is the guest of honor. Events include gaming, panels, readings, movies, dances, an art show and auction, a dealers' room, a masquerade, and much more. Full convention rates are \$10 through March 1, and \$13 thereafter. For more information, contact: AGGIECON 18, Box J-1, Memorial Student Center, College Station TX 77844, or call (409) 845-1515.

MICROCON '87, April 4-5

Sponsored by the Southwest Texas State University Science Fiction/Fantasy Society, this gaming convention will be held at Flowers Hall on the SWSTU campus in San Marcos TX. Scheduled activities include game tournaments, a movie room, dealers' room, game room, and a Star Trek trivia contest. The convention runs from 10 A.M. to 8 P.M. on Saturday and from 1 P.M. to 7 P.M. on Sunday. Admission is \$2 for preregistration or \$4 at the door. This fee covers admission for both days. There is also an additional fee for each game; this averages to about \$2 per game. For more information, contact: MICROCON 87, 233 Springtown Way, San Marcos TX 78666, or call (512) 353-4501.

GAME FAIRE '87, April 10-12

This gaming convention will be held at the Spokane Falls Community College in Spokane Falls WA. Sponsored events include AD&D® game tournaments, chess matches, CAR WARS® games, micro-armor, board, and role-playing competitions, as well as miniature painting, diorama, and costume contests. Other events include live SCA fighting demonstrations, panel discussions, dealers' tables, and a huge game auction. Registration for this Game Faire is \$10 for a pre-paid weekend pass, \$12 for a weekend pass at the door, \$5 for Friday or Sunday only, and \$6 for Saturday only. All profits go to the Wishing Star Foundation. For more details, contact: Paul Wilson, Merlyn's, West 621 Mallon, Spokane WA 99201, or call (509)325-9114.

MUNCHCON VI, April 10-11

The Marshall University Science Fiction Society is planning its sixth science-fiction convention, MUNCHCON VI, which will be held in Corbly Hall on the Marshall University campus in Huntington WV. This year's events include role-playing and board gaming, an art show, movies, seminars, and a hucksters' room. For more information, contact: Mary Sheffer, MUNCHCON VI Public Relations, c/o Marshall University Science Fiction Society, Memorial Student Center, Marshall University, Huntington WV 25701.

CAPCON X, April 17-19

The Ohio State University Miniatures and Gaming Association (OSUMGA) is proud to announce the 10th annual CAPCON, which will be held in both ballrooms of the Ohio Union, 1739 N. High Street, Columbus OH. CAPCON X needs referees, game masters, and judges for a number of events; individuals submitting their events prior to March 1 receive a refund on the price of admission. Admission for CAPCON X is \$3 for each day. The convention is open from 5 P.M. to 11:30 P.M. Friday, from 9 A.M. to 11:30

P.M. Saturday, and from 12:30 A.M. to 10:30 P.M. on Sunday. Sponsored events include a variety of board, role-playing, and miniatures games, a number of tournament events, and a miniature-painting contest. For more information, write to: OSUMGA/CAPCON, Box 21, The Ohio Union, 1739 N. High Street, Columbus OH 43210, or call Mark Loughman at (614)262-9057.

GAME-A-THON 4, April 24-25

This event will be held at the Town Center Hall in Santa Fe Springs CA. Role-playing, board, computer, and miniature games are offered, as well as a dealers' area and movies. Preregistration is \$4 until April 10. For details and dealers' information, contact: GAME-ATHON 4, Santa Fe Springs Gamers Association, P.O. Box 2434, Santa Fe Springs CA 90670.

LAF-CON H, April 25

Sponsored by the Lafayette Area Gamers, this convention will be held at the Family Inn in West Lafayette IN. Events include an RPGA™ Network AD&D® game tournament (open to nonmembers as well), a variety of fantasy role-playing games, war games, miniatures events, and a possible special guest or two. For further details, write to: LAF-CON II, c/o L.A.G., Box 51, Lafayette IN 47902 or call Stan Mitchell at (317) 523-2551.

AMIGOCON II, May 1-3

This science-fiction and fantasy convention will be held at the Holiday Inn Sunland Park in El Paso TX. Stephen R. Donaldson will be the guest of honor, with Real Musgrave as artist guest of honor. Events include all forms of gaming, an art show, a masquerade, and a dealers' room. Registration is \$12 for the weekend if paid prior to April 15, or \$15 thereafter; single-day registrations are \$7.50. For more information, contact: AMIGOCON II, P.O. Box 3177, El Paso TX 79923.

THE WIZARD'S CHALLENGE '87, May 8-10 *

This fifth annual gaming convention takes place at the Holiday Inn in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Scheduled activities include an AD&D® game tournament, Star Fleet Battles tournament, game demonstrations, and miniatures displays. The registrations fee is \$5 for the weekend. For details, contact: The Wizards Corner, 801C Broadway Avenue, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, CANADA, S7N 1B5.

KEYCON '87, May 15-17 *

This science-fiction and fantasy convention will be held at the Delta Winnipeg at 288 Portage Avenue in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Guests of honor will be Keith Laumer, Ken Macklin, and Mike Glicksohn. Events include folk-singing, videos, an ice cream social, an art show, an auction, a dealers' room, gaming, parties, and much more. Membership rates are \$18 until April 26, 1987, and \$24 at the door. For more information, write to: KEYCON '87, P.O. Box 3178, Winnipeg, Manitoba, CANADA, R3C 4E6.

MISCON II, May 16-17

This science-fiction, fantasy, gaming convention will be held at the Quality Inn in Missoula MT. Guests of honor are Steve Jackson, Bob Eggleton, Mike and Beth Finkbiner, and Marion Zimmer Bradley. Events include an RPGA™ Network tournament, other role-playing games and board games, videos, a masquerade, a dance, an art show, panels, and a writers' workshop. Registration is \$15 until April 15,

1987, and \$18 thereafter. For further details, contact: MISCON II, c/o WMSFC, P.O. Box 9363, Missoula MT 59807.

TECHNICON 4, May 15-17

Sponsored by the Virginia Tech Science Fiction and Fantasy Club, this gaming convention will be held at the Blacksburg Econo-Travel in Blacksburg, VA. Guests of honor include Margaret Weis, Terry Adams, and Lisa Cantrell. The convention features other guest speakers, an extensive gaming tournament, video rooms, an art show, computer games, a masquerade, and a dealers' room. Membership is \$10 before May 1 (\$6 for students) and \$13 thereafter (\$9 for students). For more information, contact: TECHNICON 4, P.O., Box 256, Blacksburg VA 24060.

BAYCON '87, May 22-26

This science-fiction and fantasy convention will be held at the Red Lion Inn in San Jose CA, over Memorial Day weekend. Guests of honor include Barry Longyear, Mike Glycer, Marta Randall, and one to be announced. Advance four-day memberships are \$25 until April 30. Thereafter, memberships are \$35 for the weekend. Single-day memberships are available at the door for \$15 per day. For more information, send a SASE to: BAYCON '87, P.O. Box 70393, Sunnyvale CA 94086.

DALLAS FANTASY FAIR, June 5-7

Sponsored by Bulldog Productions, this comic-book, science-fiction, and film supershow takes place at the Dallas Hyatt Regency, 300 Reunion at I-35. This event includes appearances by

dozens of comic-book artists, writers, editors, and publishers, as well as a number of film personalities. Other features include a huge dealers' room, a professional art show, an art contest, an art auction, video rooms, a masquerade, numerous workshops, previews of upcoming motion pictures, and a variety of gaming events and open gaming competition. Tickets for this three-day event are \$20 through May 15 and \$25 thereafter. For more information, contact: Bulldog Productions, P.O. Box 820488, Dallas TX 75382 or call (214) 349-3367.

NEO-VENTION VI, June 6-7

This gaming convention will be held at the Student Union of Kent State University in Kent OH. Sponsored events include RPGA™ Network events, miniatures displays and gaming, an art show, and numerous other attractions. For more information, send a SASE to: NEO-GS, P.O. Box 412, Cuyahoga Falls OH 44222-0412.

BATCON VI, June 19-21

Sponsored by the Southeastern Indiana Gamers' Association and Role-Players' Workshop, this gaming convention will be held at the Sherman House Inn in Batesville IN. Events include an RPGA™ Network AD&D® game tournament, an AD&D® game open tournament, a TOP SECRET® game tournament, and many other gaming contests. Also, there will be a miniature painting contest and a schedule of films. Shawn McKee, designer of Hack-n-Slash, will be this year's guest of honor. For more details and registration information, write to: SEIGA, P.O. Box 266, Batesville IN 47006-0266.

HAYSCON III, June 26-27

The Pegasus Extension cordially invites all fantasy and science-fiction gamers to participate in their third annual convention. This event takes place in the Memorial Union of the Fort Hays State University campus in Hays KS. Featured activities include all types of role-playing games, a miniatures competition, a game auction, and dealers' booths. Preregistration fees are \$10. For inquiries on registration or on game mastering for HaysCon III, send a SASE to: HAYSCON III, The Pegasus Extension, 1718 Felten Drive, Hays KS 67601

AUSTIN FANTASY FAIR, July 3-5

Sponsored by Bulldog Productions, this comic book, science-fiction, and film supershow takes place at the Austin Marriott, 6121 I-35 at U.S. 290. This event includes appearances by dozens of comic-book artists, writers, editors, and publishers, as well as a number of film personalities. Other features include a huge dealers' room, a professional art show, an art contest, an art auction, video rooms, a masquerade, numerous workshops, previews of upcoming motion pictures, and a variety of gaming events and open gaming competition. Tickets for this three-day event are \$20 through June 15 and \$25 thereafter. For more information, contact: Bulldog Productions, P.O. Box 820488, Dallas TX 75382 or call (214)349-3367.

WINDSOR GAMEFEST V, July 25-26

This gaming convention takes place at the Ambassador Auditorium in the University Centre at the University of Windsor. Featured events include role-playing, miniature, and board gaming, free movies, and a dealers' area. Registration for this event is \$10 for preregistered admission, \$12 for regular registration, and \$7 for a daily pass. For further information, contact: W.R.P.A., P.O. Box 2055, Walkerville Station, Windsor, Ontario, CANADA, N8Y 4R5. Telephone inquiries can be made by contacting Kristine Sheffield at (519)734-1150 or John Schippers, Jr. at (519) 735-5233.

CONTRADICTION SEVEN, October 2-4

This science-fiction and fantasy convention will be held at the Ramada Inn, 401 Buffalo Avenue, Niagara Falls NY. Anne McCaffrey is the pro guest of honor, with Mike Glicksohn as fan guest. Other guests include Joan Vinge, Nancy Kress, Jim Frenkel, and TS. Huff. Events offered include a costume contest (\$25 for best costume), an art auction, videos, parties, a people and thing auction, panels, wargaming, filk singing, and other fannish activities. Registration is \$13 until July 11, \$16 until Sept. 12, and \$20 thereafter. For more details, contact: CONTRADICTION, P.O. Box 2043, Newmarket Station, Niagara Falls NY 14301. Please send a SASE if you require confirmation.

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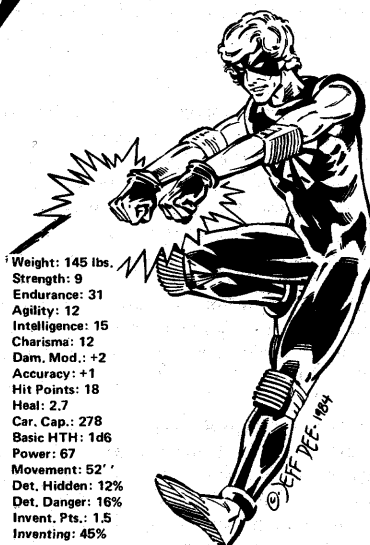
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Age: 23

Level: 1

Powers:

1. Heightened Endurance: +19
2. Regeneration: Max. once per turn, takes one action, heals full healing rate.
3. Invulnerability/20
4. Flight: Max. airspeed = 279 mph, PR = 1/hr.
5. Power-Blast: 20 inch range, PR = 1 per shot, does 1d20 damage.



Weight: 145 lbs.
Strength: 9
Endurance: 31
Agility: 12
Intelligence: 15
Charisma: 12
Dem. Mod.: +2
Accuracy: +1
Hit Points: 18
Heal: 2.7
Car. Cap.: 278
Basic HTH: 1d6
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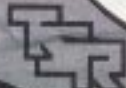
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SNARF QUEST
#43
BY ELMORE

NOLMER, DO YOU GOTTA KNOW EVERY DETAIL OF MY ADVENTURES?

YES, YOUR MAJESTY. I MUST DOCUMENT YOUR LIFE.

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OKAY, WELL... WHEN DAT LIL' TWIT REFUSED TO RIDE WITH US, WE—

YOUR MAJESTY, YOUR FRIENDS, AVEEARE AND TELERIE, REQUEST AN AUDIENCE WITH YOU.

HI GUYS. LET'S GO IN MY ROOM AN' TALK.

HI SNARF.

HI SIR.

I CAN'T TAKE DIS ANYMORE! I'VE BEEN KING FOR A WEEK AN' I'M GOIN' NUTS— EVERYBODY TOO @*% NICE!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?

SLAM

I'M NOT USED TO IT! HEY Y'KNOW WHAT? DEY TOOK ALL MY TREASURE, ALL OF IT... IT GOES TO DA KINGDOM TO FIX ROADS AN' JUNK.

I THOUGHT THAT YOU WANTED TO BE KING.

AN' DIS WEIGHS A TON... AN' DAT LIL' NOLMER DA SCRIBE IS BUGGIN' ME TO DEATH!

CLANK

BUT, SNARF, THIS IS HOW A KING LIVES.

I'M BORED! JU'S PLAIN BORED. I'M SITTIN' AROUND GETTIN' FAT.

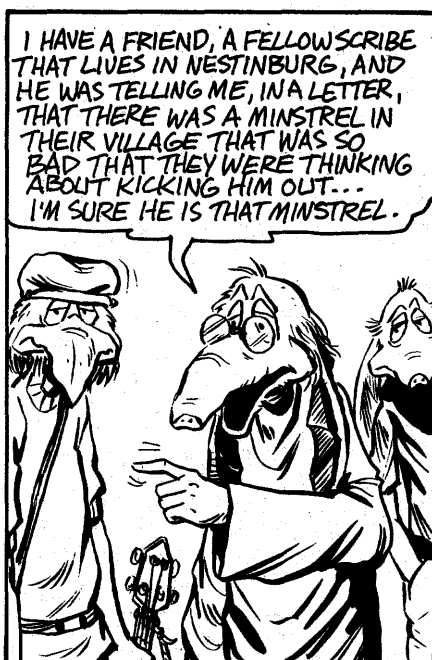
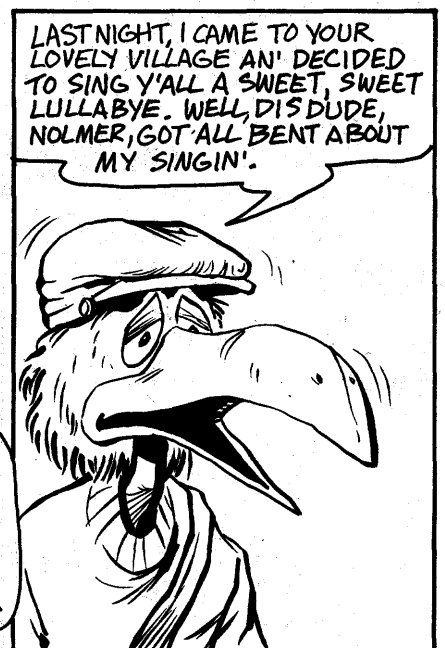
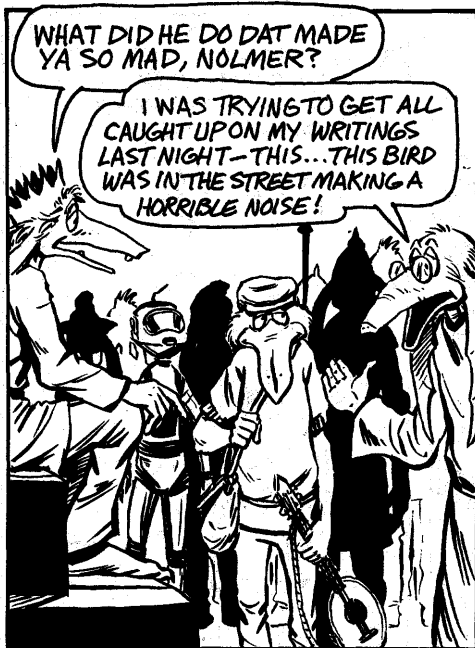
WE MUST THINK OF A WAY FOR YOU TO ENJOY YOUR KINGSHIP!

EVERY MORNIN', I GOTTA SIT IN JUDGMENT OVER ALL KINDS OF SQUABBLES AN' FIGHTS... I HATE DAT. WHAT IF I MAKE DA WRONG DECISIONS... AN' DAT'S DA MOST EXCITIN' THING OF MY DAY.

SNARF, JU'S CALM DOWN. BEING A KING IS NOT AN EASY JOB, BUT I'M SURE YOU WILL START TO ENJOY IT.

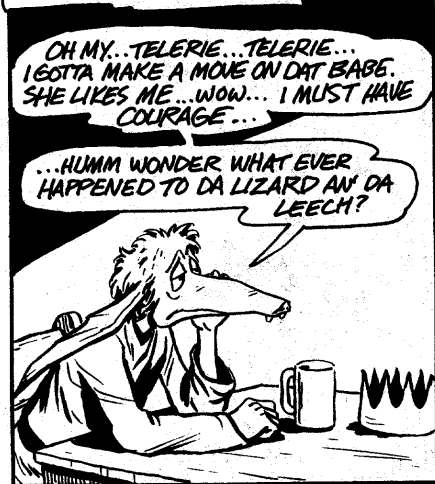
LET ME STUDY YOUR SITUATION FOR A FEW DAYS. I AM SURE WE CAN SOLVE MOST OF YOUR PROBLEMS.

TELERIE, I LIKE YER NEW OUTFIT.





THAT NIGHT, SNARF SAT ALONE PONDERING ALL HIS NEW RESPONSIBILITIES, AND A COUPLE OF OTHER THOUGHTS THAT WERE BOTHERING HIM.

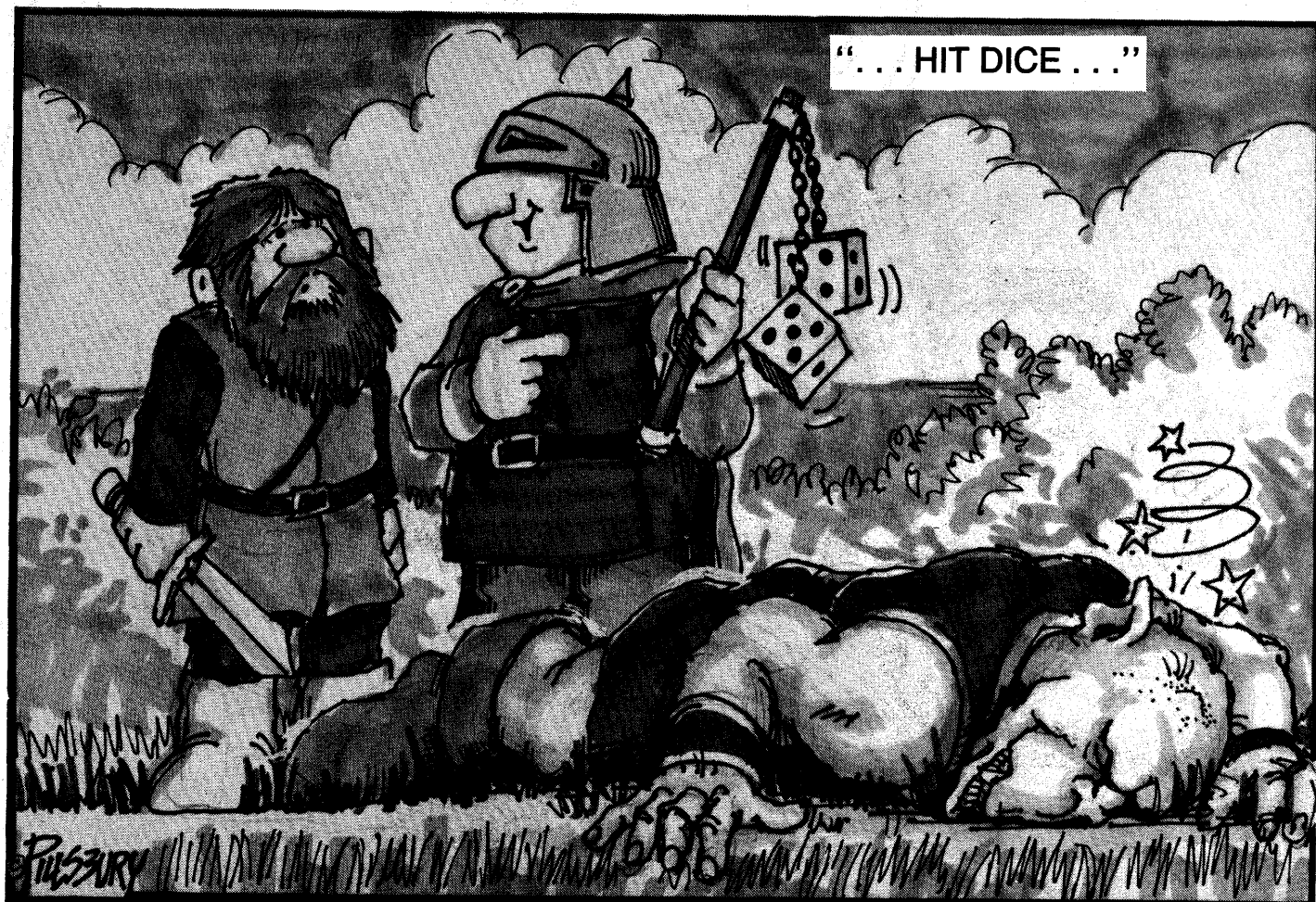
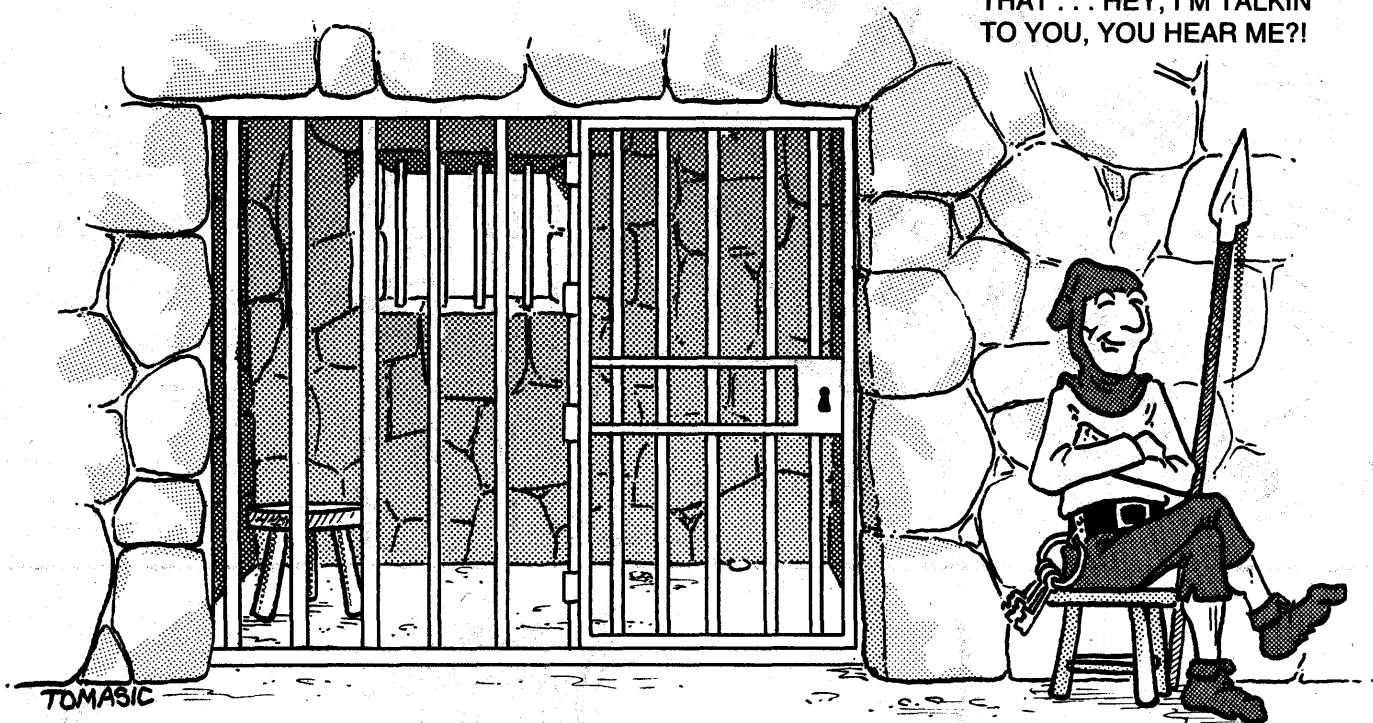


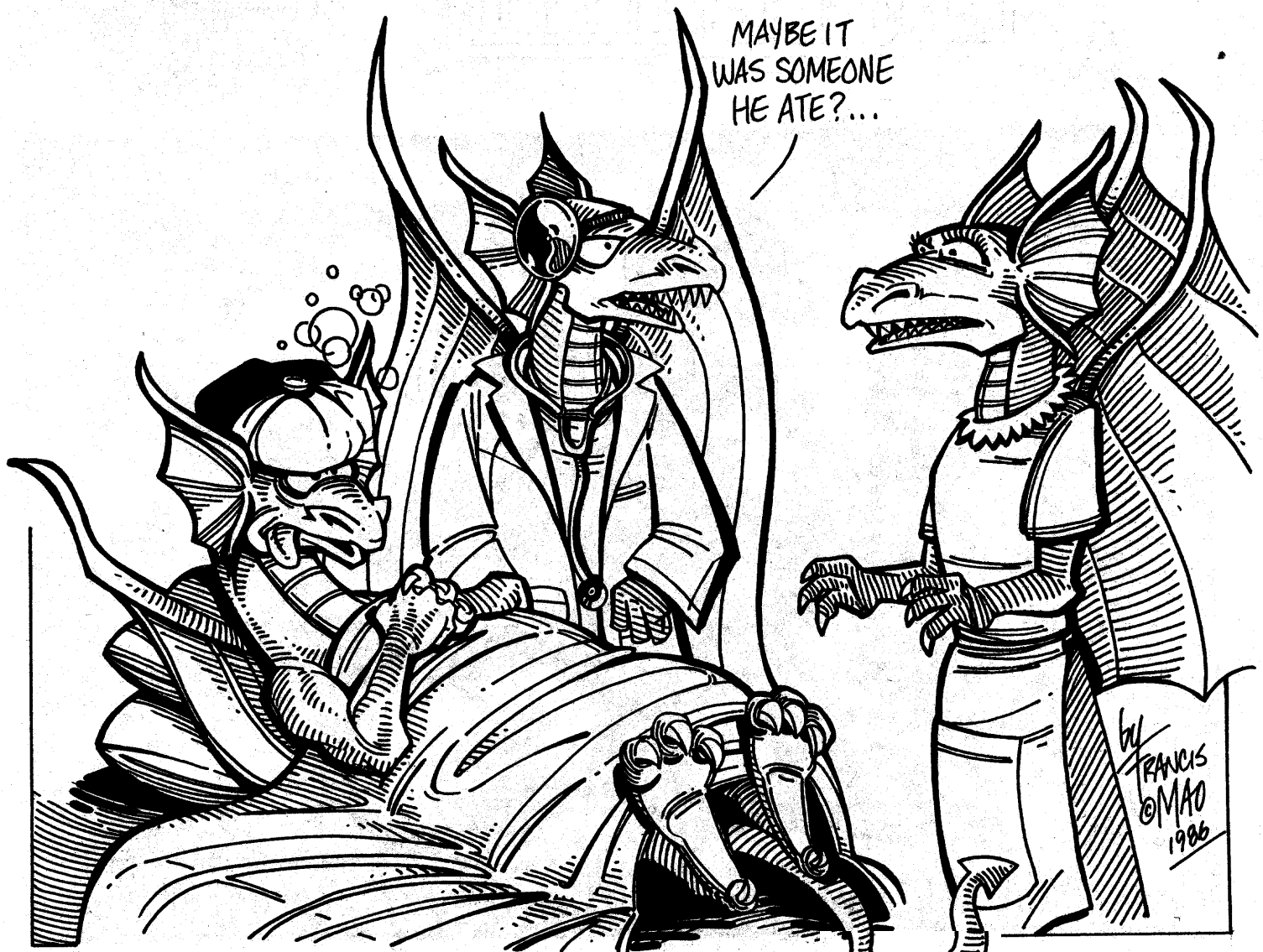
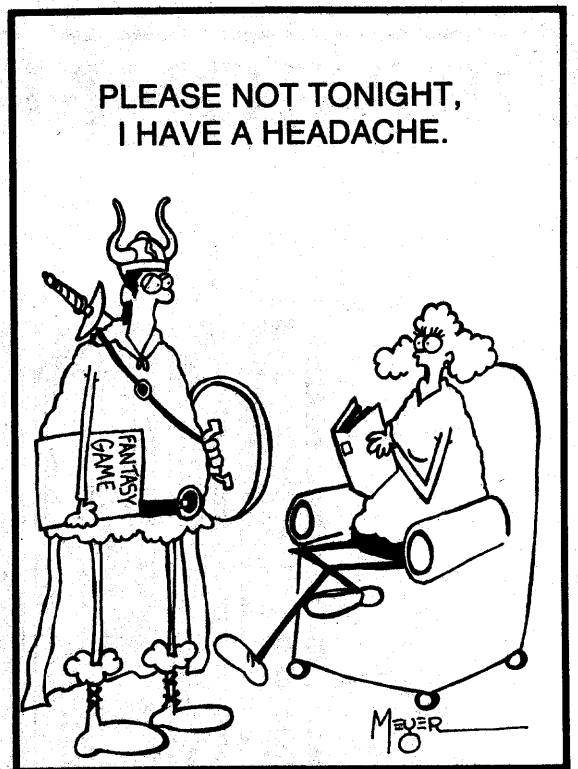
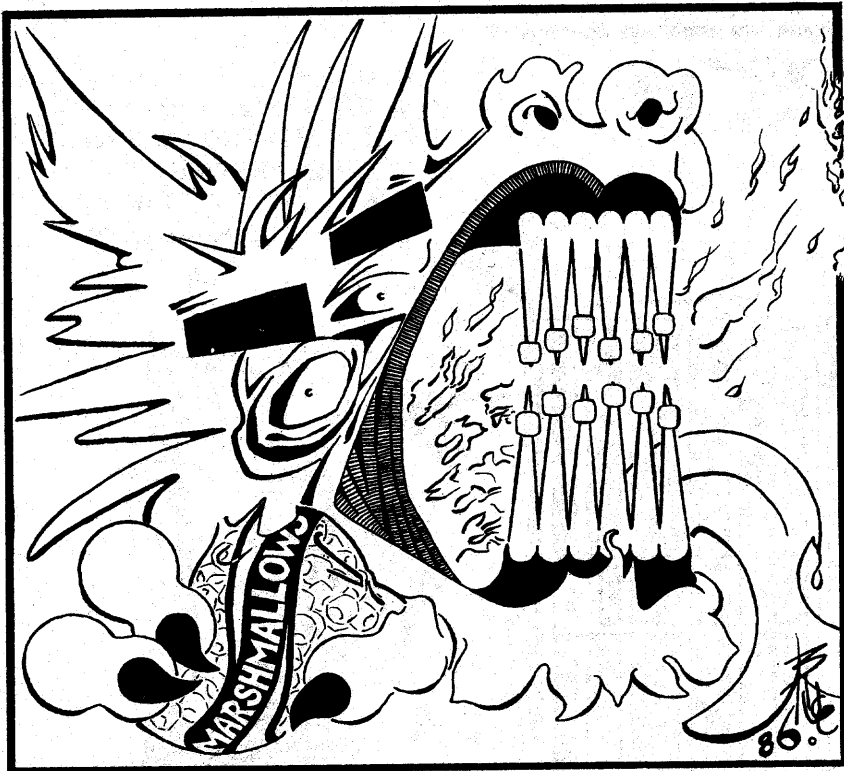
THE PROBLEM WITH TELERIE IS UP TO SNARF TO SOLVE... BUT HERE IS WHAT HAPPENED TO THE LIZARD AND THE LEECH. WHEN THE SPACESHIP LANDED, EVERYONE SCATTERED AND THE POOR OLD LIZARD GOT LOST... COMPLETELY LOST!



DRAGONMIRTH

HAH! IF YOU'RE SUCH A GREAT MASTER THIEF THEN WHAT ARE YOU DOING LOCKED UP IN HERE? ANSWER ME THAT . . . HEY, I'M TALKIN' TO YOU, YOU HEAR ME?!





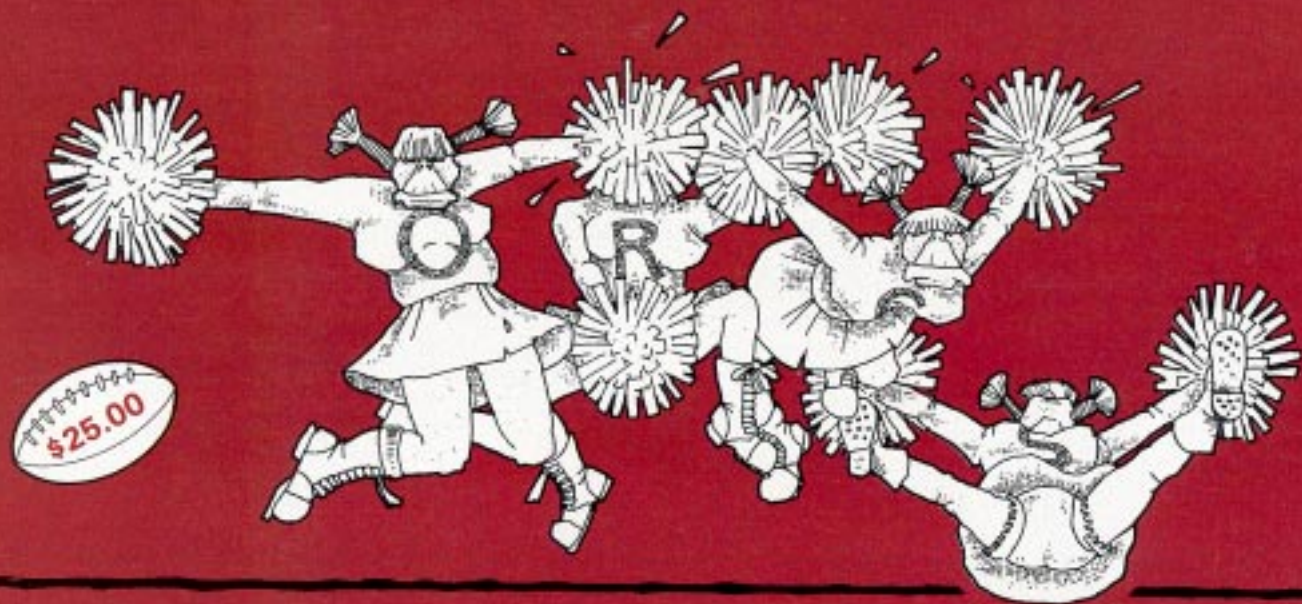








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you're a brainless troll
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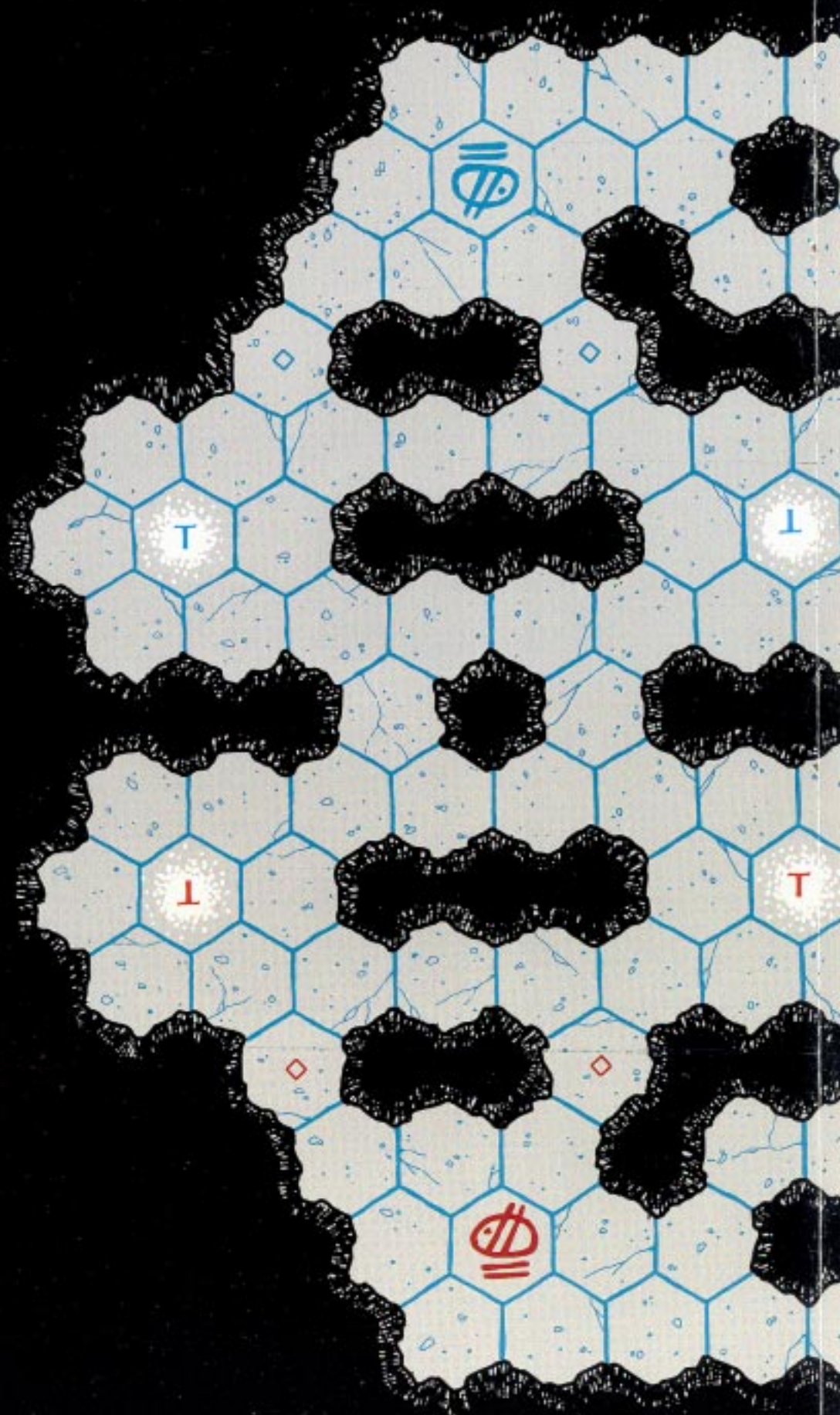


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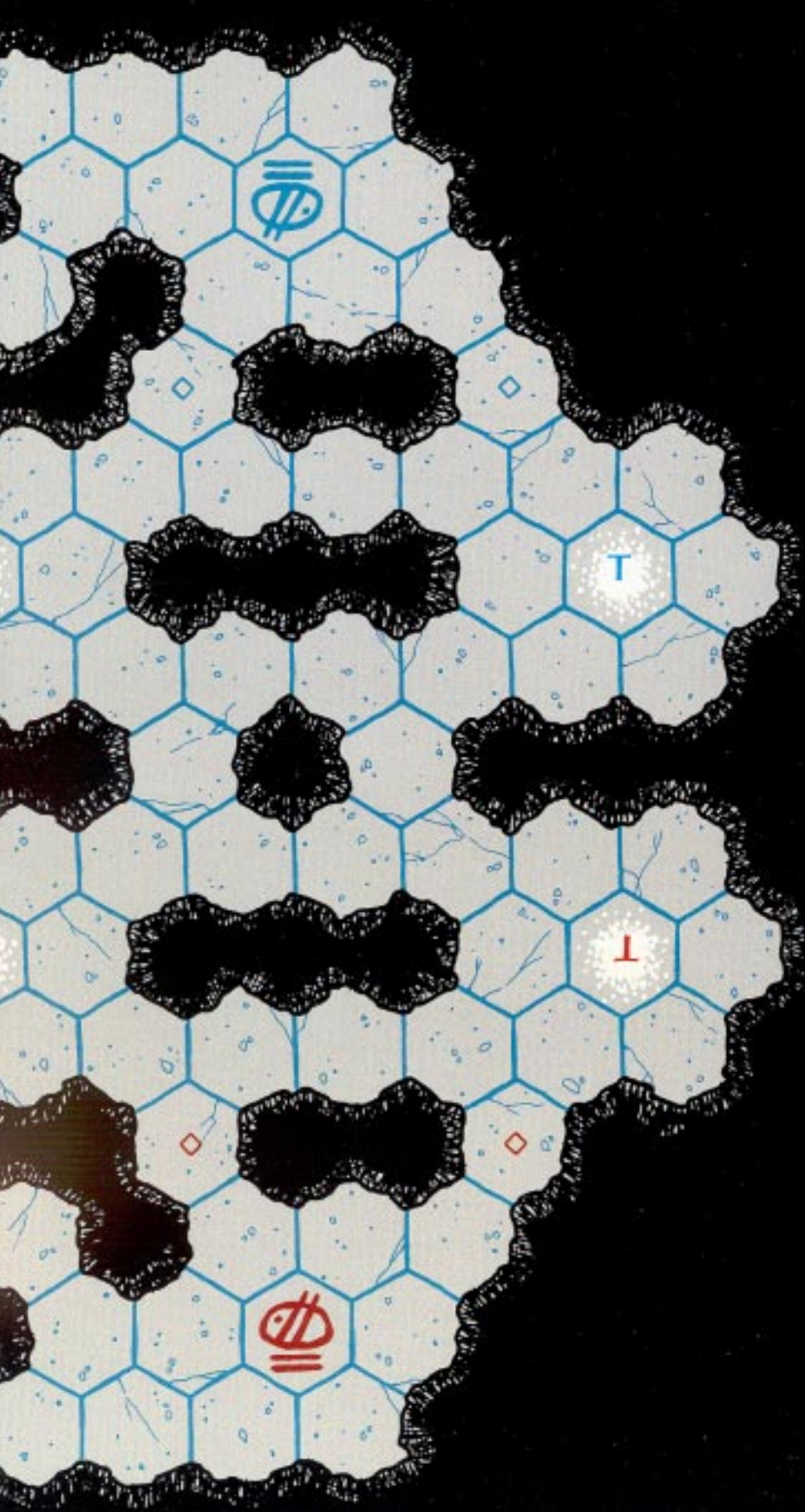
COMBAT		DIFF.	r2D6
12	-3		
11	-2		
10	-1		
9	0		
8	+1		
7	+2		
6	+3		
5	+4		
4	+5 & UP		

COMBAT		DIFF.	r2D6
		+5 & UP	4
		+4	5
		+3	6
		+2	7
		+1	8
		0	9
		-1	10
		-2	11
		-3	12



K+MHF4<H:Vt5<F0K4:hVtKk+V70

S0R4Y:PhP.V:4+R:RV.4P4K:h4MH:4+R3P



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